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A

FAMILY BOOK;

CONTAINING

DISCOURSES

ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS, BEING

DOCTRINAL, EVANGELICAL, PRACTICAL, AND HISTORICAL:

viz.

I. *The Being and Perfections of God.*
II. *The Divine and Mediatorial Character of the Lord Jesus Christ.*
III. *The Personality and Operations of the Holy Ghost.*
IV. *The Variety and efficacious Manner of the Operations of the Holy Spirit.*
V. *The Evidence of the Christian Revelation.*
VI. *The Christian Church.*
VII. *The Superexcellency of Religion in general.*
VIII. *Family Religion and Prayer.*
IX. *The Religious Education of Children and Servants.*
X. *Filial Piety.*
XI. *A Century Discourse, delivered on the 1st of January, 1800; in which are collected some of the more distinguishing Historical Facts, and Providential Events, which took place in each of the last hundred Years.*

THE WHOLE CALCULATED TO PROMOTE

CHRISTIAN PIETY, FAMILY RELIGION, AND YOUTHFUL VIRTUE.

By ELI FORBES,
Pastor of the First Church of Christ in Gloucester.

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THE AUTHOR.

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DISCOURSE

Diſcourſe I.

On the Being and Perfections of God.

ACTS xvii. 23.

For as I paſſed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inſcription—To THE UNKNOWN GOD. *Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worſhip, him declare I unto you.*

THE knowledge of the true God lies at the foundation of all true religion. Therefore the great Apoſtle to the gentiles, as he was paſſing through the city of Athens, (which was the ſeat of the muſes, the centre of the then learned world, and the glory of the Grecian empire) was greatly moved in his ſpirit, when he ſaw that, notwithſtanding all their boaſted knowledge, and refined learning, they were deſtitute of the firſt principles of true religion; as the altar which bore that ſtupid inſcription too plainly ſhewed.

The occaſion of this altar being erected, with this inſcription, is uncertain. Hiſtorians differ in their accounts. Some ſay it was erected in honour of the true God, by the order of Socrates, who had ſome knowledge of him, and held that his nature was incomprehenſible, and his perſon inviſible, and that, therefore, the only inſcription proper for this altar was, *To the unknown God*; i. e. *to the inviſible and unſearchable God.* Others ſay, that the Athenians were ſo wholly given to idolatry, that they were determin-

ed to have as many altars as there were gods; and, leſt there ſhould be ſome one god of whom they had not heard, nor honoured with an altar, they erected this, and wrote upon it, *To the unknown god;* which would equally ſerve for any god whom they had not known: ſo that now they were certain that they had honoured all the gods, known and unknown, with both an altar and ſacrifices. Others ſay, that at a certain time a very deſtructive peſtilence prevailed in the city, and the people with great ſolemnity built altars, and ſacrificed to all the gods they knew, or their anceſtors had worſhipped, and prayed with great fervency that the plague might be ſtayed; but to no purpoſe: and they applied to their wiſe men and philoſophers, to know of them what they ſhould do next, and were directed to build an altar, and dedicate it to a god whom they knew not; for they ſaid that the god who had ſent and who continued the peſtilence, and who alone could remove it, was ſurely a god whom they did not know, and whom they had not honoured with an altar and ſacrifices; for they had erected altars to all they did know, and ſacrificed to them, but the plague was not removed. And it is farther ſaid, that, when they had erected this altar in the main ſtreet of the city, and had offered ſeveral ſheep upon it, that the plague was ſtayed; and then all the people of Athens were ordered to ſacrifice upon this altar; as they concluded that there muſt be a god of whom they did not know ſo much as his name, or the particular province over which he preſided, who had ſent, and now had removed, the peſtilence, having accepted their worſhip and ſacrifice: and therefore the only proper inſcription for an altar dedicated to an unknown god muſt be that which was found in Athens—*To the unknown god.*

With this account agree the cloſing words of our text; for the apoſtle ſays, Him whom ye ignorantly worſhip declare



declare I unto you; i. e. I take this opportunity to teach you who that God is, who rules in providence, ſends and removes the peſtilence, whom you ignorantly worſhip, and to whom you have too ſuperſtitiouſly dedicated this altar. And though I do not imagine that *I* am at Athens, or that I am addreſſing heathen idolaters, in enlightened America, yet it is of the greateſt importance that we be well eſtabliſhed in the fundamentals of our holy religion, eſpecially that the minds of the riſing generation ſhould be well informed, and duly impreſſed with right apprehenſions, of the true and living God. I ſhall in the enſuing diſcourſe endeavour ſo to inform and impreſs the mind with a practical ſenſe of the being and perfections of the only living and true God, as may influence to a conduct which ſhall be well-pleaſing to him through Jeſus Chriſt.

In order to which, I ſhall briefly conſider—

I. His diſtinguiſhing and incommunicable names.

II. His perfections, both natural and moral.

III. Shew what influence ſuch a ſerious conſideration of his names and perfections ſhould have upon our temper and conduct, as the ſervants and ſubjects of the only living and true God.

And while we humbly contemplate this great and bleſſed Being, may a holy dread fall upon us, and his excellency make us religiouſly afraid; being ſenſible that on ſo ſublime a ſubject we cannot order our thoughts or expreſſions aright, by reaſon of darkneſs, and are in danger of "darkening counſel by words without knowledge."

I. The diſtinguiſhing and incommunicable names under which the Supreme Being has been pleaſed to make himſelf known in the ſacred writings, are chiefly theſe three—GOD, I AM, JEHOVAH.



1. The firſt, GOD, is uſed in the plural number, almoſt throughout the Old Teſtament, in the original Hebrew. There are a few exceptions, as in Job xii. 4, Pſalm xviii. 32. In the firſt chapter of the Bible his name is, in Hebrew, ELOHIM; and, being plural, we are to underſtand it as a name which comprehends the Trinity, as we are taught in the New Teſtament, and expreſſive of Deity. This name is derived from two words, which ſignify to *bear witneſs*, and to *worſhip*; therefore that he is the object of religious worſhip, by which we are to bear witneſs of him, "that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all them who diligently ſeek him." And with reference to the ſignification of this name our Saviour repulſed the temptation of Satan, by ſaying, "It is written, Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy GOD, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve." It is alſo with reference to the ſignification of this name that magiſtrates are called gods *(Elohim)* becauſe they who rule well are worthy, and, being repreſentatives of the Supreme Ruler, it is their buſineſs and office to conduct the ſubject, and to bear witneſs to the truth: ſo that, whenever we uſe the word God, we ſhould fix the idea to it of a Divine Being, who is the proper object of religious worſhip, who teſtifies to the intelligent world his mind and will, ſtrictly obſerves their conduct, and impartially determines according to invariable truth; whoſe perfect knowledge is in the room of ten thouſand witneſſes, and who has a plurality of perſons in one incomprehenſible eſſence.

2. Another incommunicable name, by which GOD has made himſelf known, is that under which he choſe to diſtinguiſh and reveal himſelf to Moſes in the burning buſh; and that was, I AM THAT I AM. When Moſes aſked what he ſhould ſay to the children of Iſrael, he ſhould tell them that the GOD of their fathers had ſent him to them: if they ſhould aſk him what was his name, he was anſwered, out of the burning buſh, I AM THAT I AM;

this is the name of the God of your fathers, who
ſent me unto you: which ſingular and adorable
e ſignifies, a preſent, independent, ſelf-ſufficient and
utable being.

hen God had appeared to any of the fathers of
l in any eminent or extraordinary manner, or on any
ial occaſion, as this was, he uſually aſſumed a name,
me expreſſive of the deſign of his appearance; and
name which he had appeared under to Abraham,
c and Jacob, was God Almighty; by which he
uraged their faith, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf from
mpotent idols of the heathen; and therefore Moſes
ght it probable, that when he ſhould tell the children
rael that the God of their fathers had appeared unto
, that they would want to know whether he did ſtill
ar under that name, as their ſtrong and almighty
er. With this view he humbly inquires of God
r his diſtinguiſhing name, that he might be able to
ver the people; and God ſaid, I AM THAT I AM:
ame that implied all that which was contained in the
e under which he had before appeared, and ſome-
g more; that he was not only the Almighty, but a
exiſtent, independent, immutable and ever-preſent
d: a name expreſſive of his nature, and the deſign of
appearing, and highly proper at this time, when he
about to bring them out of the houſe of bondage,
from under the hand of tyranny and cruel op-
ſion, "with a high hand, and an out-ſtretched arm,"
by a ſeries of miracles to reſcue them from ſlavery,
to carry them through a barren, howling wilder-
, to a land of liberty, peace and plenty, which had
ſeveral hundred years been promiſed to them. And
name is very near in ſignification to that other ador-
name I have to mention in the next place; and that
JEHOVAH.

3. The venerable name of JEHOVAH is the moſt expreſſive of the being and perfections of GOD, and allowed by all to be peculiar and proper only to the living and true GOD; and it is blaſphemy to apply it to any other being. It in ſhort ſignifies, He who was without beginning, is abſolutely independent of all created exiſtence, and will continue to be, without any change or alteration, forever and forever. This is agreeable to what we have in Rev. i. 18: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, who is, and who was, and who is to come." Therefore under this name he choſe to reveal himſelf to the children of Iſrael, juſt before he commiſſioned Moſes and Aaron to work wonders in Egypt; for we find that, after he had revealed himſelf by the name I AM, he appeared again unto Moſes, and ſaid unto him, "I am JEHOVAH; I appeared unto Abraham, unto Iſaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known unto them: wherefore ſay unto them, I am the Lord; [Hebrew, JEHOVAH] I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians; I will redeem you with a ſtretched-out arm, and with great judgment, and ye ſhall know that I am JEHOVAH*." The meaning is this—'I appeared unto the fathers of this people as their ſtrong God, the proper object of their worſhip, able to protect and defend them from evil; but I never manifeſted myſelf before to be that eternal, immutable, ſelf-exiſtent and independent being, that I am about to do, through the whole ſeries of that diſpenſation under which for the future I ſhall take them; a diſpenſation of ſurpriſing providences, and miraculous events, which, as it opens, will more and more prove me to be JEHOVAH; an eternal, immutable, ſelf-exiſtent and an abſolutely independent being: and I ſhall prove myſelf true and faithful by the judgment which

* *Wherever* the word LORD is found in our American Bible *in capitals, it is in the* Hebrew Jehovah.

which I ſhall execute on mine and on my people's enemies; and will punctually perform all the promiſes which I have made to Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob; and I will bring you into the land which I ſware unto them that I would give it to you for an inheritance. I am JEHOVAH.' And it is with reference to the ſignification of this wonderful name, that it is ſo often added to a promiſe or a threatening, that thoſe to whom the promiſe is made might have ſtrong conſolation, and that thoſe againſt whom the threatening is denounced might "hear, and fear, and do no more ſo wickedly," or, by a ſpeedy repentance, prevent the impending blow.

Theſe *three* are the principal names under which the Father of the Univerſe has been pleaſed to reveal himſelf in our Scriptures: there are indeed others; as, the Almighty, the Rock, &c. all of which are implied in one or other of the three, and may more properly be conſidered as attributes of Deity, than diſtinguiſhing names; therefore I ſhall wave a particular conſideration of them, and proceed to ſay ſomething of the perfections of GOD, which are both *natural* and *moral*.

The Natural Perfections of GOD are—

1. His *Eternity*. Of this his name JEHOVAH is very expreſſive; for that implies (as I have ſhewn) that he is ſelf-exiſtent, always was, is, and ever will be, the ſame. The eternity of JEHOVAH is evidently neceſſary, from the nature and reaſon of things. To create is to act; nay, it is the exertion of an almighty action; and to ſuppoſe that he created himſelf, is to ſuppoſe that he acted, nay, that he exerted an almighty act, before he had any being, or while he was in a ſtate of non-exiſtence; an abſolute impoſſibility in nature. And to ſuppoſe that he was made, is to ſuppoſe that there is a being ſuperior or prior to him, on whom he was and is dependent: therefore that he is not the firſt, the ſelf-exiſtent and independent God; that

he

he is not JEHOVAH. Hence it is evident to every reflecting mind, that he always was, without beginning of days; and, as he is "over all GOD bleſſed forever more," ſo he always will be the "Father of Light, without any variableneſs, or ſhadow of turning"—is, as the Scriptures call him, the ETERNAL GOD, "who alone has life and immortality."

2. Another natural perfection of the Deity is *Independence.* This indeed is implied in his eternity. He is ſo far independent on all created exiſtence, that all creatures are dependent on him for their exiſtence, and all the attendant circumſtances of being: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all; to whom be glory forever, Amen."

3. *Immutability* is another natural perfection of God; and this is indeed contained in, and reſults from, the two former. He who had no beginning, and will have no end, he who exiſts neceſſarily and independently, muſt exiſt immutably. If he changes, it muſt be a voluntary change, and muſt be for the better or for the worſe. He cannot change for the better, if he is already the *beſt*; he cannot change for the worſe, for that would be weakneſs or wickedneſs: when, therefore, it is ſaid in Scripture that he repents, or changes his mind, it is only ſpoken after the manner of men; and nothing more can be meant by ſuch expreſſions, but that he accommodates the diſpenſations of his providence to the ſtate and characters of men: and the variations which appear in his providential diſpenſations are not in him, but in them who are the ſubjects of his government; for he is of one mind, and nothing can change him. Immutability is ſo cloſely connected with ſupreme perfection, that all who believe the one, admit the other; and the ſame reaſon which has taught the wiſe and reflecting mind, in every age, to believe that what is immortal cannot die, has likewiſe taught, that

what

what is perfect cannot change: therefore God claims it as his prerogative—"I am the Lord, I change not."

4. *Omniſcience* is alſo to be reckoned among the natural perfections of the Deity. And by this we underſtand that he perfectly knows all things paſt, preſent and to come. This follows from his immutability and independency; for if he is abſolutely independent, and all creatures and things are dependent on him, then it is not poſſible that any creature or thing ſhould exiſt or happen without his knowledge; therefore he muſt know all things. Or, if it was poſſible that any thing ſhould exiſt or happen without his knowledge, then it might be poſſible, nay it might be proper and neceſſary, that he ſhould change; for if he was uncertain about any thing, then he could not tell what was beſt to determine about that thing; and when he ſhould come to be aſcertained of that of which he was before uncertain, it might be proper and neceſſary to alter his purpoſe with reſpect to that thing of which he was now aſcertained. Therefore it is abſolutely certain that he perfectly knows *all things*—is omniſcient in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. The ſacred Scriptures ſpeak of God's perfect knowledge of things which are leaſt known to finite and limited minds; the future actions of free and moral agents, who act from different motives, and are governed by different principles. That the future actions of both good and bad men were, and are, ſtill perfectly known to God, is evident from his exactly foretelling when and what they would be, long before they took place; as, for inſtance, he knew when the children of Iſrael ſhould go down into Egypt, and how long they ſhould continue there in a ſtate of bondage and ſlavery, and therefore foretold it to Abraham. He knew what Pharaoh would do, before he ſent Moſes to him, and therefore he told Moſes, before he ſent him, I know that he [Pharaoh] will not let you go; but I will ſtretch out my hand, and ſmite Egypt,

Egypt, and afterwards he will let you go. He alſo foreknew, and therefore he foretold, what king Joſiah would do, ſeveral hundred years before he was born. He perfectly knew, and foretold, what treatment our Saviour would meet with, both from his own diſciples and the Jewiſh rulers, long before he was born of the bleſſed Virgin: therefore it is plain, both from reaſon and facts, that God is omniſcient, and that "known unto him are all his works from the beginning unto the end," though we muſt confeſs that "ſuch knowledge is too wonderful for us: it is high; we cannot attain unto it."

5. Another natural perfection of the Deity is *Omnipreſence.* By this we underſtand that he is every where preſent at one and the ſame time; he fills heaven and earth and all places with his preſence. The Pſalmiſt, deeply ſenſible of this, inquires, "Whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence? If I aſcend to heaven, thou art there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea, even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me; if I ſay, the darkneſs ſhall cover me, even the darkneſs and the light are both alike to thee."

And this attribute is a neceſſary conſequence of the other perfections; for, if all creatures are dependent on him, it is neceſſary that he ſhould be preſent in every part of the creation, or thoſe parts where he is not preſent to uphold, would fall into nothing. If he was not every where preſent, the harmony of the univerſe would be broke in upon; ſome of GOD's faithful ſervants would be without his protection, and his promiſe would fail; for he has ſaid, "I will never leave thee nor forſake thee."

If God was not omnipreſent, he would not be the proper object of religious worſhip, nor the hearer of prayer

and it would be as vain for us to call upon him, as it was for the prophets of Baal to call aloud upon their dumb and senseless idol.

He must be every where present, or the wicked would break in upon some parts of his government, and frustrate the schemes of his providence. In short, he must be every where present, or he could not hear the many millions, in different and distant parts of the universe, who are daily addressing the throne of grace; nor could he govern the world, or be true to his word.

But, by being present every where, we are not to understand that he is in the same sense present in all places as he is in the kingdom of glory; for there, as it were, he keeps his court: there he displays his divine perfections in such a manner that the adoring angels cannot behold his throne without veiled faces. But he is every where present by the exertions of his wisdom, power and faithfulness; by which the universe is upheld in being and order, good angels directed, evil angels restrained, good men defended and comforted, and the wicked reclaimed or punished.

There is another sense in which it may be said that God is omnipresent, viz. all things and all *times* are present to him; he takes in the whole universe with his eye, and discerns as clearly all things, which ever were or ever shall be, as we do the single object which is this minute before our eyes, or the single point of time which is now present; and therefore he has been called by the schoolmen an *Eternal Now*, and his omnipresence has been termed by them his *ubiquity*; for eternity is present with him. Agreeably to this we often find many things spoken of in his word as if they were present or past, which were not nor could be accomplished until many ages to come; as, for instance, the birth, the incarnation and sufferings of Christ are spoken of in scripture as present, though they did

did not take place for a long time after. When the prophet Iſaiah ſpoke of the birth of Chriſt, he ſpoke of it in the preſent tenſe: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." So, when the ſufferings and death of Chriſt were ſpoken of by the ſame prophet, he ſpoke of them as paſt: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows; yet we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted." And when the ſweet Singer of Iſrael celebrated the triumph of his aſcenſion, he ſang of it as already paſt: "Thou didſt aſcend on high, thou haſt received gifts for men. Thou haſt led captivity captive:" which words were particularly applied to the aſcenſion of Chriſt, and his receiving the miraculous gift of the Holy Ghoſt, and his triumphing over the prince and powers of darkneſs: which events did not take place for ſeveral hundreds of years after they were ſung by David as if they had been already paſt. So the day of final judgment is ſometimes ſpoken of in prophetic ſtyle as already come. Enoch propheſied (as related by Jude) ſaying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his ſaints, to execute judgment upon all." Thus a thouſand years are with the Lord as one day, and one day as a thouſand years: he does not calculate time by ſucceſſion of days, months and years, as we do; but, with one intuitive view, he takes in a boundleſs eternity, with all the infinite orders of being, and all their various actions, tempers and ſtates; and the moſt minute attendant circumſtance does not eſcape his notice; for not a ſparrow lights on the ground, or perches on a bough, without his knowledge and inſpection.

Theſe are all natural and incommunicable attributes of Deity, of which no mere creature can be poſſeſſed, and beſpeak underived divinity.

We proceed to take into conſideration the Moral Perfections, which are natural and communicable attributes of Deity.

1. Rational

1. *Rationality*, or the power of reaſoning. That God is the fountain of reaſon, and that this diſtinguiſhing power is in him in the higheſt degree of perfection, is ſelf-evident; for every moral perfection in the creature muſt be in the Creator in its higheſt perfection, as in its original. But then we are not to conceive of reaſon in God from what we perceive in ourſelves while we are exerciſing this power. We lay down certain propoſitions, and then draw certain concluſions from them; we connect ideas and ſentences, and then determine upon certain truths which ariſe from that connexion; and ſo we come at the certain knowledge of one truth, by reaſoning on, or arguing from, others, and arrive by a chain of arguments at the knowledge of certain truths more remote, and leſs obvious, by arguing from firſt principles and ſelf-evident propoſitions. But to God all things are open and plain: he does not come at the knowledge of one truth by arguing from another, or, by combining ideas, and attending to the connexion and relation which ſubſiſts between the various parts of the combination, draw the conſequence: for he has one clear, intuitive view of all poſſible things, without the ſucceſſion of ideas, or following a chain of argumentation; ſo that he has reaſon in perfection, taking in at one view all that the whole intelligent creation can ever arrive at by the cloſeſt reaſoning, and infinitely beyond what created intellect can reach: and, though God does not reaſon as we do, yet it is moſt evident that he has the power in perfection; as a man who has the clearest ideas, and can, without much labour, argue on any point clearly and forcibly, we ſay, he is a man of ſenſe, he reaſons well, or is a man of ſtrong reaſon, though he may not proceed in that ſlow way of argumentation which many others of weaker minds are obliged to do. And therefore God is ſpoken of in Scripture as having an immediate and perfect view of all his works, from the being to the end; of ſuch perfect and infallible know-

ledge, that it is impoſſible for him to err, but he always determines according to the immutable nature and reaſon of things.

2. The next moral perfection of Deity which we ſhall contemplate is *Goodneſs*. This is a perfection we always connect with the idea we form of GOD; but then we muſt always diſtinguiſh between the principle, and the exerciſe of that principle toward proper objects. The ſacred Scriptures make and keep up that diſtinction:—"O Lord, thou *art* good, and thou *doeſt* good." The goodneſs of GOD in principle is an immutable diſpoſition to acts of benevolence, and the exerciſe of that principle is the actual beſtowment of favours upon their proper objects. The principle is neceſſary, and goes into the very idea we form of the great Firſt Cauſe; the exerciſe of that principle forms a leading trait in all his works; for behold they are all very good. The very nature of GOD is *goodneſs* and *benevolence* itſelf; goodneſs and benevolence are therefore neceſſary in the ſame ſenſe that his exiſtence is neceſſary. But the exerciſe of this principle is free and voluntary, and is always the reſult of his other moral perfections, and under the direction of infinite wiſdom, and in ſtrict conformity to eternal reaſon, juſtice, and the fitneſs of things; and the benevolent diſpoſition is not exerciſed without a good reaſon for it. We muſt not conclude, becauſe GOD is good in principle, neceſſarily good, that therefore he muſt neceſſarily communicate happineſs to all his dependent creatures, according to their nature and capacity; but that his communicative goodneſs, or the acts of benevolence, are free and voluntary, founded in eternal reaſon, directed by infinite wiſdom, adjuſted by perfect equity in all its operations. If the communications of the benevolent principle were neceſſary, as the principle itſelf, then all creatures, without any regard to their characters, would be equally happy according

according to their capacity, and evil of every kind would be excluded from all the works of God; and happiness in reasonable creatures, the subjects of God's moral government, would in no sense be the reward of their virtue. But we see and feel that there is evil in the world, both moral and penal, both sin and pain; and we are assured that every one will be rewarded in the future world according to his works: and this is perfectly right, and the determination of the Divine Goodness. The goodness of God, when moral agents are considered as its objects, is not a disposition to make all equally happy, indiscriminately, at any rate, and by any means: such indiscriminate goodness would not be an excellency becoming a being who is perfectly wise, just and reasonable, as well as good. Goodness in God is undoubtedly a disposition to make the good, the upright, the sincere christian happy; and it is always exercised in such ways, and to such a degree, as will best correspond with the plan of his general government, and most illustrate his other moral perfections. Goodness in God is a principle which in all its operations is invariably directed by moral rectitude, and an eternal aversion to moral evil. Happiness is its object, happiness is its end; but then it must be right happiness, happiness which is the gracious reward of true virtue. Thus God is good in himself, and his goodness extends through the universe. He is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.—This leads us to consider another of his moral perfections, and that is—

3. *Mercy.* I mention this next, as it is near akin to Goodness, and differs from it only in its objects. The objects of mercy are those who are in some degree miserable, but have no just claim to favour: so that mercy in God is a gracious disposition in him to relieve distress, and shew favour to those who have rendered themselves unworthy

worthy of it, and who are in ſome degree miſerable. In this ſenſe GOD was merciful when he pitied man, fallen into a ſtate of ſin and miſery, in which he muſt have periſhed without help or hope, but from the mere mercy of GOD. This interpoſed, and ſaid, "Live; I have found a ranſom; I have laid help on one mighty to ſave:" and this was no other than the beloved SON of GOD, through whoſe interpoſition and mediation ample proviſion was made for the reſtoration of fallen man to the image and favour of GOD. This was all rich, free, ſelf-moving mercy in GOD: and we may join with Moſes, and ſay, "The Lord thy GOD is a merciful GOD." And indeed the ſcriptures often ſpeak of GOD as being greatly moved with pity and compaſſion towards the miſerable and diſtreſſed; that he was even grieved and afflicted with the miſeries and calamities that were fallen upon mankind, eſpecially thoſe which his own covenant-people were ſuffering; that he was preſſed with grief; that his bowels were turned within him: but this is ſpoken after the manner of men, and we muſt be careful, when we contemplate the Divine Nature, not to clothe it with the infirmities of human paſſions. But the mercy of GOD ſteadily produces the moſt ſubſtantial effects of the tendereſt pity and compaſſion. When GOD proclaims his name from Mount Sinai, it is, the Lord, the Lord GOD, *gracious and merciful;* and when the people murmured and rebelled, and carried their outrage ſo high that they were upon the point of ſtoning their rulers and leaders, and the Lord's anger was kindled againſt them, and he ſaid unto Moſes, "How long ſhall this people provoke me to anger? Let me alone, and I will deſtroy them;" Moſes laid hold on this divine perfection, and ſaid, "Let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou haſt ſpoken, ſaying, The Lord is long-ſuffering and of great mercy: pardon I beſeech thee this people, according to the greatneſs of thy mercy." This branch of the divine

goodneſs

goodneſs is, as well as power, under the direction of wiſdom, and limited by eternal reaſon and equity, and is exerciſed in a way and manner, and to a degree, that correſponds with the harmonious diſplay of the other moral perfections of God. Let none preſume on the mere mercy of God, and ſin that grace may abound. Thoſe who do, muſt not expect that he who made them will have mercy on them, or that he who formed them will ſhew them his favour: for he will ſhew mercy on whom he will ſhew mercy, but in conformity to his impartial juſtice.—This leads me, in the next place, to ſpeak—

4. Of the *Juſtice* of God; another eſſential moral perfection of Deity. Juſtice in God is an immutable diſpoſition always to do that which, from the unalterable nature and reaſon of things, is right; and it is agreed upon by all mankind, that the Judge of the world muſt be juſt; and in the adminiſtration of diſtributive juſtice, eſpecially in conferring rewards and puniſhments, both in this life and in the next, the Judge of all the earth will certainly do exactly right. This perfection is ſo eſſential to the very idea we form of a God, that all who acknowledge his exiſtence, acknowledge his perfect and impartial juſtice. But the "Lord our God is a God of knowledge, by whom actions are weighed" in a ſcale of inflexible juſtice. Abraham, ſatisfied of this, acquieſced in that diſpenſation which marked out the deſtruction of thoſe infamous and abandoned cities, Sodom and Gomorrah; yet he grounded his plea to exempt the righteous from the general deſtruction, upon his known and impartial juſtice: "That be far from thee," ſaid Abraham, "to ſlay the righteous with the wicked! for ſhall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" In extraordinary caſes, when God comes out of his place to puniſh any flagrant wickedneſs, a diſtinction is made, as there was in the deſtruction of the old world by the deluge. Noah was diſtinguiſhed and ſaved, "for thee," ſaith God, "have I found

righteous." In the ſingular caſe of the deſtruction of the cities of the plain by fire, Lot, whoſe righteous ſoul was grieved with the abominations of the wicked around him, was exempted, and ſnatched as a brand out of the burning. And in that extraordinary phenomenon of the earth opening her mouth and ſwallowing up Korah, Dathan and Abiram, with their rebellious crew, a remarkable diſtinction was made between the righteous and the wicked: not one who was not concerned in that rebellion received the leaſt injury. But in the common courſe of Divine Providence, where ſecond cauſes act agreeable to the eſtabliſhed laws of nature, without any miraculous interpoſition, they produce effects, which often involve the righteous and the wicked, without any diſtinction; for there is "one event to the righteous and the wicked;" as, for inſtance, winds, ſtorms, thunder, earthquakes, peſtilence, famine, &c. Hence when ſecond cauſes act freely, according to the fixed laws of nature, there can be no diſtinction of characters, and the juſtice of the Supreme Judge remains unimpeached: for as this life is, in order to another, deſigned as a ſtate of trial, we muſt not expect that the juſtice of GOD will, through the adminiſtration of promiſcuous providence, always appear to us in that ſtate without a cloud, or that no myſtery will attend the execution of GOD's providential government; "but what we know not now, we may know hereafter;" for now even the ſaints of GOD know but in part, and that part is ſeen through a glaſs darkly; now we live by faith, not by ſight; when this ſcene cloſes—when the patience and the forbearance of GOD has been exerciſed towards ſinners, drawn out to long-ſuffering, to ſome longer, to others ſhorter, as the wiſdom and goodneſs of GOD ſhall ſee fit, or as the nature, reaſon and fitneſs of things require—and when the faith, the patience, the reſignation and hope of his ſaints ſhall be matured for the inheritance in light—then every thing will be adjuſted

and set to rights, and "every one will receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil." Perfect and impartial justice will then be administered, without any respect paid to persons; no hiding or palliating crimes; "for the Lord our God is a great and terrible God, who regardeth not the persons of men:" then the Cæsars and the Alexanders, or proud and oppressive tyrants, who have overthrown kingdoms, who have laid waste countries, deluged the earth with blood, and oppressed millions merely to gratify a sordid lust, will seek to hide themselves in dens and caves of the earth, or cry to the mountains and the rocks to fall on them, and to hide them from the face of the Lamb, when the great day of his wrath shall come. Then will the justice of God break forth as light, and appear before an assembled world perfectly equitable, and strictly impartial; and we may now say, "Just and true are all thy ways, O God, and holy are all thy works."—This leads to the consideration—

5. Of the *Holiness* of God, which is the next moral perfection we shall contemplate. The holiness of God is rather the perfection of all the attributes of Deity, than a distinct and separate attribute in itself; for no other attribute of the divine nature would be a perfection without this; without this, power would be oppression, sovereignty tyranny, wisdom would be subtilty, goodness would be fondness, justice would be cruelty, and truth would be falsehood: therefore the Scriptures speak of the holiness of God as the most consummate excellency of the Divine Nature, a perfect freedom from all sin, vice, moral defect or impurity, and positively and infinitely possessed of the contrary moral perfections; therefore God is said to be "glorious in holiness;" and to sit upon the throne of his holiness; and heaven itself is called the "habitation of his holiness," and "the place where his honour dwelleth;" because there, and there only, appear,

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is said to be the Only Wise God. This denotes that he is originally and independently so, as no other being is or can be, and that perfect wisdom and design always attend all the operations of his power, providence and grace. Wisdom is a perfection essentially different from cunning, craft or intrigue, and always supposes something good, amiable and engaging. "Wisdom in the Supreme, imports rectitude of nature, justice, benevolence and goodness, carried into execution by the best-adapted means." If we contemplate the works of creation, providence, and redemption, with a serious and devout mind, we shall see such evident marks of consummate wisdom, in and through the whole, as might well fill us with adoration and astonishment, expressed in the words of the Apostle—"O the depth both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!

7. We next speak of the almighty *Power* of God; for omnipotence is one of the moral perfections of the Deity. Power in God is an ability to do every thing which implies perfection; a perfect, active principle, which can do all things with ease, or without labour, and at once in the most perfect manner. He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." This almighty, active principle in God is always under the direction of infinite wisdom, and limited by the nature and reason of things. It may be said, that there are some things which Omnipotence cannot do. God cannot deny himself, or make both parts of a palpable contradiction true, or a moral evil good, or a moral good evil; for these are natural impossibilities. It is evident that divine power, which belongs to God, is always under the direction of infinite wisdom, and limited by the other divine perfections, and the nature and reason of things. This is the idea which the Scriptures give us of the power of God. The Psalmist said, "Twice have I heard that power belongeth unto God;" Job said, "I know, O Lord, that thou canst do every thing;" and our

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Mind there is a perfect rectitude of will, the perfec- of knowledge, and an infallibility of underſtanding; herefore ever maintains a ſtrict correſpondence be- n his words, the ſentiments of his mind, and the re- of things: as, for inſtance, when he declares a thing e ſo, or not, it is really as he declares; when he com- ds us to do any thing, it is his will or mind that we ld do it; when he forbids us to do any thing, it is will that we ſhould abſtain; when he declares any g future, that will certainly come to paſs exactly in time and manner he had foretold it. If the declara- is abſolute, it will abſolutely take place in the time manner declared; if it is conditional, it will certain- me to paſs when the conditions are complied with, t is his mind, and "he is a God of truth, juſt and t is he." His faithfulneſs chiefly reſpects his pro- s, and their accompliſhment. When he promiſes a l to certain perſons or characters, he adds an obliga- of juſtice to that of his word; for when he promiſes onfers a right on them to whom the promiſe is made, gh the good promiſed was all of rich and free grace, refore the Apoſtle obſerves, that the crown of life ld be conferred by God, as the righteous judge, on he faithful, though that crown was the free gift of through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, becauſe it was pro- d through him to all ſuch, by the God of truth, who ot lie. That this perfection eminently belongs to , is evident, both from the light of nature, and di- revelation. The very nature and reaſon of things, he dictate of the conſcious mind, tell us that truth faithfulneſs are perfections that belong to all intelli- t beings; and the want of them implies not only imperfections, but great, if not the worſt, of crimes; fore infinitely removed from the all-perfect Deity. th and faithfulneſs are ſuch perfections, that a hea- ence ſaid, "If the gods were to become viſible, their

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bodies would be compoſed of light, and their ſouls of truth:" and the Scriptures every where aſcribe this perfection in the higheſt degree to God. Samuel ſaid, "Now O Lord thou art God, and thy words are true and faithful;" the Pſalmiſt ſays, "The paths of the Lord are all mercy and truth;" Moſes ſays, "The Lord our God is abundant in goodneſs and truth." In one word, it is impoſſible that it ſhould be otherwiſe; his truth is as immutable as his juſtice, as unalterable as his nature, and as infallible as his wiſdom: what he has ſaid has been upon the principles of eternal and unalterable reaſon; he will therefore as certainly perform the thing that has gone out of his mouth, as he himſelf ſhall exiſt; for, if one jot or one tittle ſhould fail, he would ceaſe to be true, and therefore ceaſe to be the true and living God: ſo that the divine veracity is as it were the bond of all the perfections of the Deity, the ſtrength of the divine government, the ſupport of the univerſe, the hope and comfort of all the ſaints. The divine veracity is the *key note* in that ſacred anthem ſung by the angelic hoſts, when united with the aſſembly of glorified ſaints. They ſet to their ſeals that God is true, and ſtrike up an anthem in celebration of the divine veracity—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are all thy ways, O thou King of Saints: who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy."

Thus I have endeavoured to lead you into ſome right apprehenſions of the true and living God, declaring unto you him whom too many ignorantly worſhip. I have uſed not the enticing words of man's wiſdom, but as great plainneſs of ſpeech as I have been capable of on ſo ſublime a ſubject. My chief aim has been, to inſtruct the ignorant, eſpecially the young mind, and thoſe who ha[ve] not time nor diſpoſition to think ſeriouſly and properly

that Being in whom they live and move and have their exiſtence. No doubt there are ſome, even in this enlightened age, who would be confounded at that plain and ſhort queſtion, *What is* GOD? not becauſe they are either totally ignorant of him, or are diſpoſed to deny him, but becauſe they have not accuſtomed themſelves to think ſeriouſly or properly of him: he is not in all, nor in hardly any, of their thoughts; they do not inquire in earneſt, Where is GOD my maker? From the dictates of nature, the voice of reaſon, and the force of education, they conclude that there is a ſupreme being, and that he ought to be worſhipped by his rational and intelligent creatures, and therefore pay him ſome acts of homage and worſhip, in private or public, without perhaps ſo much as once thinking what kind of being he is, or what ſort of worſhip and homage is due to him. Now the worſhip of ſuch is much like that paid by the Athenians to the unknown GOD, and the inſcription on their altar would be like theirs. And there are others who know GOD, but glorify him not as GOD; who, while they profeſs with the mouth that there is a GOD who judgeth in the earth, yet ſay in their hearts that there is no God. The ſpirit and language of their conduct is *practical infidelity*.

Now, that I might awaken in ſome a ſerious and practical ſenſe of the ever-living JEHOVAH, that they might realize themſelves in his preſence, and think, and ſpeak, and act, for the future, in a manner worthy of that ſpiritual, holy, wiſe, juſt and good Being whom they have too ignorantly worſhipped; and that the profane and preſumptuous tranſgreſſor might be reclaimed, and reduced to the love of GOD, and the practice of thoſe things which are pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt; I have, in a conciſe, and I hope in an intelligible, manner, diſcourſed on the natural and moral perfections of GOD. And now what improvement ſhall we make, or what influence ſhould theſe ſerious and ſublime truths have upon our hearts and lives?

They ſhould at leaſt engage us, when we addreſs him, to do it in ſuch a manner as is worthy of a being poſſeſſed of the moſt adorable and amiable perfections, proper to command our reverential fear, excite our ardent love, and to produce that ſincerity, and that undiſſembled uprightneſs, in which alone he takes pleaſure. Let us not ruſh into his preſence as the horſe ruſheth into the battle, or as inconſiderately as a fool goeth to the correction of the ſtocks; nor ſhould we be ſatisfied with only uttering over a dull form of words, more like a ſenſeleſs charm addreſſed to a dumb idol, than a ſpiritual ſacrifice offered to the ever-living JEHOVAH.

1. Is he not only a being of infinite and unerring reaſon, but the origin of all intelligence? Let us pay him our grateful acknowledgements, that he made us reaſonable creatures—breathed into us the breath of life: for "verily there is a ſpirit in man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty gave him underſtanding." Let us never act below this noble character, or ſubject our reaſon to the tyranny of the paſſions, prejudices and luſts. Often ſhould we call ourſelves to an account, and inquire whether we act a reaſonable part, and devote our rational powers to him from whom we received them; yielding our bodies and ſouls to him as a ſort of living ſacrifice, which is our moſt reaſonable ſervice.

2. Is he good, good in himſelf, and good to all—whoſe tender mercies are over all his works? He made a world, and made man, that he might have objects on whom he might beſtow his bounties. Let us then return him our moſt unfeigned thanks for the benefits of creation, for the bounties of providence, and for the diſtinguiſhing bleſſings of grace; and let his goodneſs lead us to repentance, and animate us to a life of gratitude and obedience, and diſpoſe us to do good to our brethren of mankind, as we *have ability* and opportunity; that we may be, and appear

pear to be, the children of that GOD who does good to the evil and unthankful, and ſendeth his rain on the juſt and unjuſt.

3. We have heard that he is not only good, but merciful. He pitied our fallen race, took our caſe, when it had become deſperate, into conſideration, and, from his ſelf-moving benevolence, and rich and free mercy, laid help on one mighty to ſave, and in the fulneſs of time ſent his beloved Son into our world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might have life. O let his mercy, which has interpoſed between us and ruin, and which has appeared unto all men in his goſpel, teach us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world, looking for the bleſſed hope, ſo that we may not receive this grace of GOD in vain; and let the bowels of mercy, which moved towards us, fill us with compaſſion for others in diſtreſs, and let us aim to be merciful, as our Father who is in heaven is merciful.

4. He is juſt; a GOD of judgment, by whom actions are weighed. This teaches us that we ſhould live righteouſly, rendering to GOD the things which are GOD's, and to Cæſar the things which are Cæſar's. We ſhould do juſtice to ourſelves—ſeek, ſecure and promote our higheſt intereſt; and be ſtrictly juſt to all men, doing to others at all times as we would have others do to us in change of circumſtances.

5. He is holy. This we ſaid implies all moral perfection. Let us then venerate this amiable attribute, and ſtand at a diſtance from all ſin and moral evil, and with a ſcrupulous caution ſhun the very appearance of it; never make the bold experiment how near we may approach its dangerous boundaries without being chargeable with poſitive guilt; but let us ſeek earneſtly the ſanctifying influences of the bleſſed Spirit, that we may be ſanctified wholly, and

be

eſired it."

In one word—Is he wiſe and powerful
al? Let the conſideration of this excite
n all providential events, calmly confidi
ve protection and immutable veracity; :
ur own weakneſs, and that it is not in r
ray, let us aſk wiſdom of him who givetl
nd upbraideth none; and, ſenſible of o
et us truſt in the Lord JEHOVAH, in wh
trength. While we are ready paſſiona
hat all men are liars, let us truſt in the
or bleſſed are all they that put their tr
s a rock, and his way is perfect; anc
ruth are the operations of his hand.

It is our duty, honour, intereſt and h
pleaſe a GOD of ſuch perfections; and
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bleſſed GOD, and an internal conform
image, then it becomes the fruit of ſa
and, having our fruit unto holineſs, the

Diſcourſe II.

The Divine, Moral and Mediatorial Character of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

MATTHEW, xxii. 42.

What think ye of Chriſt? whoſe ſon is he?

TWO form right apprehenſions of JESUS CHRIST, and to have thoſe apprehenſions take hold of the heart, ſo as properly to influence the life, is eſſential to that religion which he came to reveal and eſtabliſh in the world. For want of this, the Jews treated the bleſſed Jeſus with contempt, and rejected both his perſon and his goſpel. They formed very falſe apprehenſions of their promiſed and expected Meſſiah. Miſtaking the Sacred Oracle, and entertaining wrong notions of true greatneſs, they concluded that he would come in all the apparent grandeur and external pomp of an earthly prince; that he would erect a political monarchy among them, make Judea the centre of his kingdom, and Jeruſalem his royal city, where he would fix his palace, and keep his court. Being prepoſſeſſed with theſe wrong apprehenſions, as ſoon as they beheld the humble form in which Jeſus of Nazareth made his firſt appearance among them, they deſpiſed him, and rejected both his perſon and the meſſages which he brought; for, when he came to his own [nation] they received him not: but contemptuouſly inquired, "Can

"Can there come any good thing out of Nazareth?" though he came (except his uncourtly appearance) with demonſtrations of his divine original, which proved him to be the true and long-expected Meſſiah who was to come, and that they need not look out for another. The ſcribes, phariſees, and ſadducees, the ruling party, treated him with ſcorn, and repreſented his peculiar doctrines as juſt matter of ridicule; and, that they might draw the odium of the common people upon him, they artfully endeavoured to entangle him in his talk, and to puzzle him with hard and perplexing queſtions, ſeveral of which we have in our context; as that in the 17th verſe—"Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæſar, or not?" This queſtion was put to him by the diſciples of the phariſees, with the herodians, men of different ſentiments, and in different intereſts: the phariſees ſtrenuouſly maintained, that the Jews, being the covenant people of God, ought not to pay tribute to a Gentile prince or lord, and the herodians as warmly plead for Cæſar's authority; ſo that, let him anſwer which way he would, he muſt either draw upon him popular reſentment, as the betrayer of the liberties of a free people, or expoſe himſelf to an accuſation of ſedition or treaſon againſt Cæſar. But his anſwer was ſuch as left his enemies no room to form an accuſation againſt him: "Render to Cæſar the things which are Cæſar's, and to God the things which are God's." Another perplexing queſtion was put to him by the ſadducees, about the reſurrection of the dead, and a future ſtate, both which they denied. They put the caſe of a woman who had had ſeven huſbands in this world ſucceſſively, and then aſk whoſe wife ſhe would be be at the reſurrection; for they all had an equal claim to her in this life. His anſwer to this queſtion was ſuch as fully proved the doctrine they denied, and ſhowed that their error as to the reſurrection and a future ſtate ſprung from groſs ignorance of the Scriptures and the power of

God

God; and carried such conviction along with it, as astonished the multitude, and silenced the sadducees. A third question was asked him by a captious lawyer, with the same ill-natured design. This question referred to a dispute which subsisted among the sectaries of that day, about the preference to be given to the ceremonial or the moral law. He asked, "Which is the great commandment of the law?" Our Saviour answered, "This is the first and great command of the law—Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart; and the second is like unto it—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" so making supreme love to God, and impartial love to our neighbour, the basis of christian morality, and the operating principle of universal obedience to all the commandments of God, without giving the preference to any, either moral or positive: which frustrated the malicious design of the crafty querist, and put him to silence. Then our divine Lord in his turn put the serious and interesting question of my text—"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" They said, "He is the son of David;" which indeed they could not reconcile with David's calling him Lord. I shall humbly attempt an answer to this question, and shew whose son he is, and what we should think of him. That I may do this in as plain, concise and intelligible a manner as I can, I shall endeavour to unfold and display his divine, moral and mediatorial offices and characters. I do not expect to satisfy the curious, or remove every objection; but I hope to lead the young and candid inquirer into the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and to benefit the rising generation, whose edification I have chiefly in view.

I. We shall take a view of his *Divine Character*. And it is evident that he possesses the natural and moral perfections of Deity, and that we should think of him as divine; the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person; and in this respect we should



should honour the Son as we honour the Father. As, for instance, he is *omnipresent*—a perfection peculiar to Deity, not communicable to any mere creature, how exalted soever he may be; for it is said of God, that he fills all places with his presence: "Can any hide himself in secret places that I should not see him?" saith the Lord: "do I not fill heaven and earth?" i. e. there is no hiding from God, because he fills all the infinite extension of space. So the Psalmist strongly and beautifully interrogates in such a manner as plainly implies the strongest affirmation: "Where shall I go from thy Spirit? whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there; or if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there," &c. That heaven, earth and hell are full of the divine presence, and every part of the universe lies under the inspecting eye of Jehovah, is a truth which the wiser heathen admitted.* In the same verse Jesus Christ is said to be present every where. The apostle Paul says, "He filleth all things." So he promised to be with each of three of his sincere disciples, wherever they should meet for religious worship in his name. He, who could fulfil this promise without he is omnipresent, for there may be a thousand of these little assemblies at one and the same time, a thousand miles distant from each other. So he promised to be present with his faithful disciples in the discharge of their duty, to the end of the world, which would be impossible without he is present in all places at one and the same time, and throughout all times, in all places, where he has or ever will have disciples, to the end of the world. He therefore fills all things—is in all places, in heaven, on the earth, in public and private assemblies, in and with every individual, at one and the same time, and at all times; and is therefore omnipresent in a proper and divine sense.

* *Omnia plena Jovi.* Juven.

2. Jeſus Chriſt is *eternal* and *immutable*; and eternity and immutability are eſſential and incommunicable attributes of the Deity. I mention theſe together, becauſe they imply each other; and I mean to be as conciſe and plain as poſſible. It is aſſerted, that Jeſus Chriſt is "without beginning of days, or end of life:" it is ſaid, he is the Alpha and Omega, the Firſt and the Laſt:" it is ſaid, that "Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame, yeſterday, to-day and forever." He who is without beginning of days, or end of life, the Alpha and Omega, the ſame, yeſterday, to-day and forever, muſt be eternal and immutable: but Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to be ſo, and is therefore poſſeſſed of all thoſe incommunicable attributes of the Deity.

3. Jeſus Chriſt is *omniſcient*—another natural and incommunicable attribute eſſential to the Deity; which implies a full and perfect knowledge of all things paſt, preſent, and to come, with all the thoughts, purpoſes, deſigns and projections of intelligent and moral agents: and this knowledge is alone the prerogative of God. Solomon juſtly obſerves, "Thou, (ſpeaking of God) even thou only, knoweſt the hearts of the children of men." This ſame knowledge the bleſſed Jeſus aſſumes, and ſays, "I am he who ſearcheth the heart." And Peter, addreſſing himſelf to his divine Maſter, ſays, "Thou knoweſt all things." John ſays, "He knew what was in man;" and Matthew ſays, that "he knew their thoughts:" nay, he ſays himſelf, that as the Father knew him, ſo knew he the Father; putting himſelf in point of knowledge upon a level with the adorable Father. Now it is certain that he who ſearcheth the heart, he who knows the thoughts of men, and is in them—nay, that he who knows God in the ſame manner as he is known of God, muſt be poſſeſſed of omniſcience in the fulleſt ſenſe: and it is certain that Jeſus was and is poſſeſſed of this knowledge in the fulleſt ſenſe, and therefore muſt be properly and truly divine—the true God, and Eternal *Life.*



providence is expreſsly aſcribed to Jeſus Chriſt: for the Apoſtle ſays not only that all things were made by him and for him, but that by him all things conſiſt; i. e. it is by his powerful providence that all things which have been made by him are preſerved by him, and are controuled and directed to their various ends and uſe, in their various orders and motions: it is by his providence that all things are what they are. And, leſt it ſhould be underſtood as though he acted by a delegated power, as God's vicegerent, or deputy-governor, in the kingdom of providence, it is affirmed, that he "upholdeth all things by the word of his power." If he upholds and governs all things, then he muſt have all providential events in his hands, and under his controul, and muſt be ſupreme in the kingdom of providence. And, as a further evidence of his ſupremacy in providence, he is the conſtituted Judge of human actions, and will preſide on the final day, and aſſign to men rewards and puniſhments; for we are aſſured, from his own mouth, that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men might honour the Son as they honour the Father." Now it is ſaid that we muſt all give an account of ourſelves unto God, and yet it is affirmed, that we muſt all, ſmall and great, ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt: therefore it is plain that Chriſt is God. And, agreeable to this, when the prophet Zechariah deſcribed the judgment day, he ſaid, "The Lord my God ſhall come, with all his ſaints with him, and he ſhall be King over all the earth:" and this ſame glorious perſonage, who ſhall come with all the ſaints with him, the Apoſtle ſays expreſsly is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Thus it appears, that he who upholds all things by the word of his power; that he who controuls, governs and directs all things to their ſeveral ends, and fixes the final ſtate of all the human race, and is expreſſly called the *Great God*, the *True God*, and by the Pro-

phet, the *Lord my God*, and by the Apoſtle, my *Lord and my God*, muſt deſerve divine honours, and to be acknowledged the Supreme Lord of providence.——I paſs n the next place to ſpeak—

3. Of his *miraculous works*. I ſhall not pretend to give you a complete hiſtory of his miracles; for if all that Jeſus did and ſaid were written, the whole world would ſcarcely contain the books, or it would be too voluminous for common uſe. I ſhall only collect a few inſtances, juſt enough to prove that he had unlimited power over every part of the creation, ſo that all nature felt his power, and ſubmitted to his authority.

The inanimate part felt his power, and ſubmitted; he curſed the fig tree, and it immediately dried up; he commanded the ſea, and it immediately obeyed him without reſiſtance; when the waves ran high, at his rebuke they ſubſided into a calm: he chid the winds, when they blew a ſtorm, and they were at once huſh and ſilent, inſomuch that all who beheld the miracle were aſtoniſhed, and ſaid, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and ſea obey him!"*

The animal world felt and ſubmitted to his government: The unbroke colt behaved in his hands as well as the beſt managed horſe, though by the ſacred ſtory it appears highly probable that he had no other bridle than a halter, and no other ſaddle than the outſide garments of his admiring attendants. And the fiſh too, which are as much beyond human controul as the element they ſwim in, even theſe obey his orders; one of them paid his tribute, and thereby owned his juriſdiction over them. The ſame miraculous power, or greater, did the bleſſed Jeſus

* *The conſcious waters felt the pow'r divine,*
Confeſs'd the GOD, *and bluſh'd themſelves to wine.*

Jeſus exerciſe over the rational part of the creation. The human body and mind felt his power, and found it to be divine. He gave ſight to thoſe who had been born blind; he unſtopped the ears of the deaf; he looſened the tongue of the dumb; he reſtored cripples to the free uſe of their limbs, who had been lame from their mothers' womb; he rebuked malignant fevers, and they immediately left the diſeaſed perſon; he cleanſed the polluted leper with a word ſovereignly ſpoke—*I will, be thou clean;* he cured the incurable paralytic; he diſpoſſeſſed evil ſpirits, and delivered thoſe who had been bound by Satan, reduced them to their reaſon and ſenſes, and, what is much more wonderful, inſpired them with the temper and ſpirit of the citizens of heaven; for the divine Jeſus exerted a force equally miraculous over the mind as he had done over the body; as, for inſtance, he ſo intimidated a whole aſſembly of ſcribes and phariſees, that he drove them from their counters, which they had ſacrilegiouſly erected in the temple, and from their ungodly gains, unaſſiſted by any human aid, and armed only with a ſingle ſcourge, and the energy of a ſhort remonſtrance—"It is written, My houſe ſhall be called a houſe of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." He flung ſuch terror into a body of Jewiſh officers, and Roman ſoldiers, who came to apprehend him in the garden, as that for a moment they were wholly diſarmed of all their courage—a terror which blaſted all their rage and fury, even though it was wrought up to ſuch a pitch of mad frenzy as to eraſe all the tender ſentiments of humanity; for the ſacred text ſays that they went backward and fell to the ground: and the words which he made uſe of when he confounded his aſſailants were in themſelves the moſt gentle and kind—when he ſaw them advancing in a hoſtile manner, with ſwords and ſtaves, he meekly aſked, "Whom ſeek ye? they ſaid, Jeſus of Nazareth. He ſaid, I am he; if

ye

ye ſeek me, let theſe go their way." So (as one obſerves) he capitulated for his friends, while he implicitly reſigned himſelf their priſoner: but his words were with power: never man ſpake like him. The ſame miraculous power he employed in making diſciples, that he did in laying proſtrate his enemies. He commanded James, John and Matthew, with an air of meek majeſty, to follow him; they all obeyed him, and became his diſciples and conſtant followers: they received the call when they were in the midſt of all the ardours of ſecular life; they quit their worldly views, to follow a deſpiſed Maſter. To Zaccheus, whoſe curioſity to ſee Jeſus led him ſo far to forget his rank as to run before the crowd, and to climb a tree, that he might have a better proſpect of him in the midſt of the ſurrounding multitudes, he only ſaid, "Come down, for I muſt abide at thy houſe:" Zaccheus immediately obeyed, and received him joyfully, not only into his houſe, but into his heart, where he had wrought a mighty change; from an oppreſſive publican he became a benevolent ſaint; and was willing to ſhare his eſtate with the poor, as an acknowledgment of a much greater favour which he had received from the gracious Saviour of ſinners. Thouſands beſides, who had been the tame ſlaves of the prince of darkneſs, were by his almighty word, accompanied by divine grace, freed from darkneſs, chains and guilt, and made the free citizens of heaven; ſnatched (as one obſerves) from the ſuburbs of hell, and inveſted with all the privileges of the ſons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; which is the moſt illuſtrious of all the miracles which the bleſſed Jeſus wrought. His miraculous power was not limited by the confines of mortality, but death and hell owned his ſupremacy: the dead heard his voice, and came forth; for he had power over the grave; demons left their poſſeſſions, and ſtood trembling before him, and aſked, with diabolical conſternation, "Art thou come to torment us before the

time?

time? we know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God;" and they dared not injure the moſt deſpicable animal without his leave.

And, as an addition to the glory of his divine character, he delivered himſelf as a God, and ſpake as never man ſpake; he wrought his miracles in his own name, and by his own authority; therefore he ſaid to the ſick of the palſy, "*I* ſay unto thee, Ariſe, take up thy bed, and walk"—to the leper, "*I* will, be thou clean"—to the dead he ſaith, "*I* ſay unto thee, Ariſe"—and to the buried he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." When he delivered his meſſages, he put on an air of divine majeſty: he did not uſe the ſtyle of the preceding prophets, who came with a *Thus ſaith the Lord*, but *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee.*

And to all this we may add the united ſuffrages of all the prophets, the apoſtles, the ſaints below, and ſaints above, who have all ſubſcribed to his divine character; who have all either expreſsly called him God, or have aſcribed ſuch perfections to him as would be blaſphemy in them to do, if he was not God, or truly divine. David called him, My JEHOVAH; Iſaiah, The *mighty God*; Zechariah called him, JEHOVAH, MY GOD; Malachi called him JEHOVAH; St. Paul called him GOD over all, GOD manifeſt in fleſh, and the Great GOD; Thomas called him his *Lord and his God*; and the apoſtle John calls him, expreſsly, the *true God*, and *Eternal Life*; And the twenty-four elders, the repreſentatives of the Old and New Teſtament ſaints, have ſummed up and united in their evidence, and expreſsly addreſs him under that glorious and incommunicable title, *Lord God Almighty*. And now what think ye of Chriſt? Whoſe ſon is he? We muſt, I think, all with one voice ſay, Verily he is the ſon of GOD, worthy of divine honour and adoration; and *to honour the Son* as we honour the Father. And this

will

will appear with illuſtration if we take an impartial view of his moral character. If indeed he is poſſeſſed of the natural and incommunicable attributes of Deity, we cannot doubt of his moral character; nor can it be neceſſary to ſay much on this, after what has been ſaid of his divine character. Yet, for the benefit of youth, for whom theſe diſcourſes are principally deſigned, I would obſerve—

1. While he appeared in fleſh, he fulfilled *all righteouſneſs*. He was holy, harmleſs, ſeparate from ſin. His human nature was the immediate and miraculous production of the Holy Ghoſt, and therefore immaculately *holy*, free from that contamination which, through the early apoſtacy, had polluted human nature in general. Therefore the angel, who brought to the Bleſſed Virgin the news of his miraculous conception, ſaid, "The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee; and the holy thing which ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the *Son of God*." His heart was pure, there was no error in his judgment, no bias on his will, no inordinacy or alienation of affections; for we find that his firſt delight was in the ſervice of God, in the temple, where, at twelve years old, he was found ſitting within the circle of the Jewiſh doctors, hearing their learned diſquiſitions, and modeſtly aſking them queſtions, which diſcovered ſuch ſurpriſing genius, and ſuch uncommon knowledge of divine things, as aſtoniſhed the venerable bench. And, when he entered upon public life, the two fundamental principles of morality, ſupreme love to God, and benevolence to men, ſeemed to be wrought into his very conſtitution, and actuated his whole life. The Holy Father ſaw the innate rectitude of his ſoul, and teſtified at his baptiſm, by a voice from heaven—"This is my beloved ſon, in whom I am well pleaſed." And, beſides his innocency and in-

nate rectitude of ſoul, he received on that occaſion the Holy Spirit, beyond meaſure; therefore he was ſanctified and became holy to a degree beyond what any limited nature beſides ever was or could be. His exalted holineſs diſcovered itſelf in the moſt ſublime acts of piety and devotion, and an ardent deſire to pleaſe his Heavenly Father. We often hear of his retiring from a buſy crowd, and a noiſy world, that he might give vent to the ſacred paſſion of love, in holy converſe with him whom he made it the ſtudy of his thoughts, and the delightful employment of his life, always to pleaſe; and his will was ſo entirely wrought into a conformity to the divine will, that he could ſay at all times, It is my meat and my drink to do the will of my Father who is in heaven; and in the cloſing ſcene could ſay, O righteous Father, I have glorified thee on earth, and I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do; and now glorify me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

2. He was juſt, as well as holy. He was propheſied of under the character of the Juſt One: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is *juſt*, having ſalvation." And the apoſtle Peter, in his ſpirited diſcourſe, delivered to a very crowded aſſembly (in Solomon's porch) joins the epithet *juſt* to holy, and aſcribes them both to Chriſt in a very emphatical manner. "Ye have," ſaid he to the guilty Jews, "denied the *Holy One* and the *Juſt*, and deſired a murderer to be granted unto you." And even Pilate allowed him to be juſt and innocent, when he was conſtrained to paſs the ſentence of death upon him: "Take ye him, and crucify him; as for me, I find no fault in him:" and, having waſhed his hands before his accuſers, he ſaid, "I am clean (or I am innocent) of the blood of this juſt man; ſee ye to it." And all his conduct correſponded with

with his character as the *Juſt One*. "Render to God the the things which are God's, and to Cæſar the things which are Cæſar's," was a rule which he recommended to others, and ſtrickly adhered to himſelf. In a word, he was not only the author of that truly celebrated rule of univerſal equity, "Do to another as you would have another do to you," but daily illuſtrated its excellency and extenſive nature and uſefulneſs when reduced to practice, by ſhedding its ſalutary effects on all whom he had an opportunity to ſerve, in ſocial life.—This leads me to add—

3. He was *good*, without exception, and without an equal, except Him who is good to all, and whoſe tender mercies are over all the works of his hands. He was not only ſtrictly juſt, but affectionately kind, to all—the good Maſter—full of benevolence and goodneſs to all whom he converſed with, or who needed his aid. He was the good Shepherd, who cared for the ſheep, and carried the lambs in his arms. Goodneſs ſhone eminently in that part of his life which is held out in the ſacred writings to public view; this part was ſpent in teaching the ignorant, relieving diſtreſs, and in ſeeking out opportunities to do good; he took many a weary ſtep for the benefit of mankind, inſomuch that it was his diſtinguiſhing character, that he went about doing good. And when multitudes were brought to him, labouring under all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſe, he healed them all, without any other conſideration but the pleaſure and ſatisfaction of doing good; therefore his goodneſs was diſintereſted, undiſſembled, pure, divine goodneſs; for it not only conferred the choiceſt bleſſings on the bodies of the diſtreſſed, but the richeſt bleſſing on their ſouls: he not only ſent them away, who were brought to him blind, dumb, deaf, lame, crooked, ſick, &c. bleſſed with ſight, ſpeech, hearing, ſtraightneſs, free uſe of their limbs, ſenſes, health of body and compoſedneſs of mind, but with

their

their ſins pardoned, and their ſouls adorned, and enriched with divine grace; for, according to his prophetic character, he opened the priſon doors to them who were bound, he ſet the captives to ſin and Satan free, and brought them who ſat in darkneſs into marvellous light; for which purpoſe he preached the glad tidings of goſpel grace to all who would hear him. Hence we find him not only in the temple, or in the ſynagogue, on every ſabbath day, but he preached the everlaſting goſpel on other days, ſometimes on board a ſhip, ſometimes on the mountain's top; when, as a flowery author expreſſes it, "He made the mountain his pulpit, the arched heavens his ſounding-board, and invited all who had ears to hear his inſtructions, which dropped from his ſacred lips as the honey and as the honey comb." He was no bigot; he did not confine his inſtructions or his acts of kindneſs to his particular friends, but dealt them out to all deſcriptions with an impartial hand, and never ſent any away unrelieved, who came with a proper temper of mind to receive a benefit; and he ſaid, "He who doth the will of my Father, the ſame is my mother, my ſiſter and brother." And he cloſed life—gave up the ghoſt—in the exerciſe of the moſt ſublime act of goodneſs, extended to his very worſt enemies; as appears from that dying requeſt for his murderers, enforced by a plea which nothing but divine goodneſs could ſuggeſt. "Father, forgive them," was his prayer; "for they know not what they do," was the plea by which he urged it.

Having conſidered the leading and more eſſential branches of the moral character of the Lord Jeſus, and ſhewn that we ſhould always think of him as juſt, holy and good, we ſhould now proceed to ſpeak of his mediatorial character: but, before we enter upon this, we ſhall attempt to remove ſome objections which, with ſome, *may* lie againſt what has been ſaid of his divine and *moral character.*

I. It may be objected, that the doctrine of Chriſt's divinity is unintelligible; for to believe that Chriſt is God, the ſame in ſubſtance, equal in power and glory, with the Father, implies that there are either two Gods, or that two are one, both which are repugnant to reaſon and common ſenſe, and therefore not to be received as a truth:—To which we anſwer—

1. This objection is founded on an entire miſtake; for we are to receive many things for truths which to us in our preſent ſtate are unintelligible, i. e. above our comprehenſion; it is the very buſineſs of faith to receive that which is for the preſent above our reaſon to comprehend. Whatever is revealed to us, and ſupported by an evidence we cannot reſiſt, muſt be believed by us, though we may not be able fully and clearly to conceive how it can correſpond with reaſon; and if we allow the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament to be divine revelation, then every doctrine plainly revealed therein muſt be believed by us; for our faith in every Scripture doctrine ſtands not in the wiſdom of men, but is ſupported by the teſtimony of God: and to believe what God has revealed to us, is to make a good uſe of our reaſon, even though what we believe upon divine teſtimony ſhould be above our reaſon to comprehend.

2. Were we required to believe only what we clearly underſtand, and fully comprehend, there would be no virtue at all in faith, nor any uſe for faith in the whole ſyſtem of religion; for it is the very uſe of faith to conſent to and cordially receive what for the preſent lies beyond the reach of knowledge, but is revealed; and, as the doctrine of the divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a Scripture doctrine plainly revealed, as I have proved, and that revelation (I take it for granted) you will allow to be from God, we have therefore ſufficient reaſon to believe it to be true; for it is the higheſt act of human reaſon to ſubmit

ſubmit to the teſtimony of God. Let God be true, if every man is a liar.

3. To believe that there are two Gods, is a plain contradiction; for there cannot be two ſupremes—there cannot be two firſt cauſes—nor is this revealed, but denied, in the Scriptures: they ſay, there is but one only living and true God. But that the adorable Father and his divine ſon Jeſus Chriſt are one, is a truth as clearly revealed, and as fully aſſerted, as any doctrine of revelation; therefore there is ſufficient reaſon for us to believe it, though it exceeds the bounds of our narrow and limited underſtanding clearly to conceive of it.

The union of the Father and the Son is a myſtery, we acknowledge, and it is likely it will remain a myſtery to finite minds forever; for none by ſearching can find out God; none can find out the Almighty to perfection: nor is it at all ſtrange that it ſhould be ſo, for Deity alone can fully underſtand itſelf. It is not ſtrange that a worm does not comprehend and underſtand human nature, and there is ſome proportion between a man and a worm, but none between the Creator and the creature. When we attempt the compariſon we ſink below nonentity, leſs than nothing and vanity. And, though the unity of the perſons in the Deity is above our comprehenſion, yet it is not ſtrange that it ſhould be ſo, nor does it imply any contradiction; and, ſince it is clearly and fully revealed in thoſe ſacred writings which we allow to be the word of God, it is both our duty, and it is highly reaſonable, that we ſhould believe it; for it is a noble act of faith that we ſhould believe things and truths revealed to us from God, though they may appear to us the moſt unlikely or the moſt unintelligible; and they who do thus believe, merely upon the teſtimony of God, when appearances are againſt it, are ſaid to be "ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God."

4. It may be objected, that Chriſt is often ſpoken of in Scripture as diſtinct from, and in ſome places inferior to, the Father, and therefore cannot be the ſame, or truly divine:—To which we would anſwer—We own that he is in ſome places ſpoken of as diſtinct from, and in ſome others as inferior to, the Father: but then it is evident that he is in thoſe places conſidered in the diſtinguiſhing character of mediator, which is diſtinct from, and inferior to, that of his divine; for a mediator ſtands between thoſe parties he mediates for, and is diſtinct from both: as a neceſſary qualification of his mediatorſhip, he muſt be an impartial *third*, and ſtand in the ſame relation to both; therefore he muſt be both God and man, and, while he executes his high office, and mediates for God with man, and for man with God, muſt act in an inferior character, an impartial ſervant to both: therefore he is ſometimes ſpoken of as the true God, as I have ſhewn; ſometimes as really man; and ſometimes as inferior to both God and man, impartially ſerving both in the execution of his mediatorſhip. God calls him, by his prophet, his ſervant: "I will bring forth my *Servant*, the *Branch*." And when Chriſt entered upon his work, as the mediator, he owned this inferior relation, and ſaid, "I do nothing of myſelf; my Father is greater than I;" i. e. he ſtrickly obſerved the method and rules which were to be obſerved in reconciling God to man; he had no ſeparate views of his own, but ſteadily purſued the grand point, reconciliation, in ſuch ways and by ſuch rules as became an impartial mediator, upon the plan of grace agreed upon in the covenant of redemption. In the character of mediator, he acknowledged himſelf a ſervant to man, as well as to God, and ſaid, "I came not to be miniſtered unto, but to miniſter, and to give my life a ranſom for many." And it is with reference to his human nature, which he aſſumed that he might be an impartial mediator, that he is ever ſpoken of as a perſon diſtinct from and inferior



ſerior to God the Father. And his ſuſtaining, and acting in, a diſtinct character from, or inferior to, that which is properly divine, or peculiar to the Deity, can be no objection againſt his divinity, or his being eſſentially united with the adorable Father; for it is very common for one and the ſame perſon to aſſume and act in different and diſtinct characters. A king may aſſume and act in the character of a mediator between two other contending monarchs, and ſo be equally a ſervant to both, without unkinging himſelf. King Solomon, when his mother came to ſee him and to make requeſt to him, while ſitting on his throne, as ſoon as he was informed of it, immediately aroſe and went out to meet her, and conducted her into the palace, and ſeated her on his right hand. And was Solomon leſs a king becauſe he, when on the throne, aſſumed and acted in the character of a dutiful ſon to his aged and honoured mother? No, ſurely. Nor is the bleſſed Jeſus leſs divine becauſe he condeſcended to act in the character of an impartial mediator between God and man; for there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man; who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet condeſcended to aſſume human nature, and to appear in the form of a ſervant, that he might be an impartial mediator, faithful in his truſt, and able to ſave to the uttermoſt all who come unto God by him.—This leads us to ſpeak more directly—

III. Of his mediatorial character. A mediator is a manager between two; one who repreſents both parties, between whom he mediates; he muſt therefore be equally concerned for both, and ſtand equally related to both. And Jeſus Chriſt, being God and man, equally partaking of the entire nature of both, is a proper perſon to mediate between God and man. And for this divine work he muſt be qualified, commiſſioned, choſen, and faithful.

1. He

1. He was well qualified for the work; for, being a divine perſon, the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, he muſt be equal to the work, and, being human, partaking of all the ſinleſs infirmities of human nature, as well as poſſeſſed of all its perfections, he ſtood equally related to both, and equally concerned to maintain the honour, the rights and privileges of both the parties between whom he mediated. And it was neceſſary, too, that the perſon undertaking to make peace between God and man, muſt be capable of ſuffering, as well as of doing, the will of God; and therefore he muſt take on him the entire nature of man—a true body, and a reaſonable ſoul—the complete *human nature:* and this muſt be ſo united with the divine, as to make up but one *perſon;* for a mediator muſt be but one, and have no intereſt of his own, ſeparate from the intereſt of thoſe he mediates for; therefore we read, "There is one mediator between God and man." This qualification Jeſus Chriſt had, when the Holy Ghoſt came upon the Bleſſed Virgin, and the power of the Moſt High overſhadowed her, and formed that holy thing in her, the complete human nature. When the divine nature was united to the human nature of Chriſt, is not revealed, therefore it does not belong to us critically to inquire. Some have ſuppoſed that the myſterious union was formed as ſoon as the human body was complete in the womb of the Virgin; others think it more probable at the birth, when Mary brought forth this firſt-born, and laid him in a manger, where he had divine honours paid him by the ſages of the Eaſt. But others ſay, that, as nothing appeared in him from the time of his birth till his baptiſm, but what might be expected from ſanctified humanity, they had rather think that the union of the two natures was not formed until he received that ſacred rite, adminiſtered by John; when the heavens ſeemed to be opened, and the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in the viſible form of a dove, and

him, when it was ſaid, that he received the
ut meaſure; and that this reception was the
e, which from that time took a perſonal poſ-
human nature of Chriſt, and from that time
he ſingular character of God, man, and me-
theſe various conjectures as they may, I will
ne which, or whether either of them, is true,
ery one to judge for himſelf: it matters not
ion was formed, ſince it is evident that it was
ch time as qualified him to be an impartial
ween God and man—one capable of ſuffering
due to the ſinner, and neceſſary to retrieve
of the violated law: for it behoved him to
im fleſh and blood, that he might ſuffer, the
unjuſt, that he might bring many ſons and
o glory. And, being thus qualified, he re-
niſſion to ſave to the uttermoſt all who come

s inſtitutions as he ſaw would beſt ſerve the noble
s of his providential government; and therefore we
peatedly aſſured, that all power was given unto him,
n heaven and in earth. And when he was publicly
urated into the ſacred office, at his baptiſm, it is ſaid,
e received the Spirit without meaſure: it is added,
ie Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things
is hands; and in conſequence of this was that ce-
mandate uttered with an audible voice, *Hear ye him.*
ommiſſion extends to angels, men and devils—
gh heaven, earth and hell; for principalities and
s, and the rulers of darkneſs, were made ſubject to
He had all the hoſts of the infernal pit at his com-
, to reſtrain or permit at pleaſure; otherwiſe they
l have obſtructed his mediation, and rendered all his
pts for a reconciliation abortive: therefore he was
iſſioned to bear rule over all the foul and fallen
; and, though theſe were the firſt who openly and
tly attacked him, yet they afterwards tamely ſub-
l, and ſtood trembling before him, and in conſterna-
iquired, What have we to do with thee? We know
who thou art. Art thou come to torment us before
me? At another time they ſubmiſſively aſked of
i permit to enter into an herd of ſwine. Perhaps
ime ſubmiſſion was in part owing to that ſhameful
: which the moſt ſubtle and powerful of them all
vith in the cloſe of the forty days' temptation in the
neſs of Galilee, when it is ſaid, the Devil left him
airing ever afterwards of gaining any advantage
ſt him) and angels came and miniſtered unto him.
it ſeems that they were waiting in expectation of
ing, in addition to the puniſhment they were ſuf-
; for their firſt rebellion, the full weight of his
ing arm, and ſuffering all the juſt demerit of
more recent crimes, for madly oppoſing him and
neficent deſigns of his negotiating a peace between
and envied man.

mmiſſion was contained a promiſe of the en-
nd ſanctifying influences of the Bleſſed Spirit, to
attention, convince the judgment, and change
f the ſinner, and to ſanctify the believer, and
neet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light—
o the full enjoyment of the happy reſult of
diation, when the redeemed will be an addition
n of glory, the trophies of his mercy, and the
s of his ſucceſsful mediation. Without thoſe
fluences, his mediation would be in vain. Je-
have come, aſſumed our nature, obeyed and
ur ſtead—he would have laboured in vain, and
rength, his life and blood in vain—for man,
l obſtinate man, would, without thoſe bleſſed
have remained irreconcilable, rejecting every
an accomodation. Therefore in that ſacred
een the Father and the Son, the preliminaries

not as the ſcribes, and warmly urged their compliance by all the motives proper to influence reaſonable and generous minds, enforced by his moſt amiable example.

And, by virtue of the ſame commiſſion, he empowered and delegated a ſet of men, whom he had found faithful, to act for him, and in his name to renew the ſame gracious propoſals of peace, when he was gone to his Father's court in heaven, where he would act in another department of his mediatorial office—that of advocate and interceſſor; and, for their encouragement, he promiſed them his aſſiſtance and preſence, ſaying, "Lo I am with you always, unto the end of the world; he therefore who deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me, and he who receiveth you receiveth me," who ſend you; i. e. he who rejecteth the propoſals of peace and reconciliation made by you in my name, I ſhall reſpect as rejecting the propoſals made by me; and they who cordially cloſe with the propoſals made (according to my goſpel, by you in my name) I ſhall receive, as if they fell in with the ſame propoſals made by me in perſon: and he who thus receives you receives me, and he who receiveth me receiveth him who ſent me, and ſo is no longer at enmity with God, but reconciled, and intereſted in all the bleſſings of the new covenant, and which ſhall be conſummated in eternal life:—Which brings me to what I have to mention in the next place, viz. that—

By his high commiſſion, he had power to diſpenſe eternal life to all them who believe. "We are ſure that the witneſs of God is according to truth, and this is the teſtimony which God has given of his Son—that he hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." He was commiſſioned and appointed him to promiſe, enſure and confer eternal life on all who believe, or comply with the terms of reconciliation, as ſtated in, and published by, the goſpel. He is therefore ſpoken of in the

gs as the chief Corner-ſtone, the Elect and whom reſts all the chriſtian hope of future And, to ſhew what ſtreſs is to be laid on metimes called the head-ſtone of the corner, d been rejected by them whoſe office it was his church. And it is affirmed, that thoſe n him, or believe in him, ſhall not be con- nd his very name implied as much as this. *eſus* was given him by the angel before he his virgin mother, with this profeſſed pur- e might be viewed and confided in as one his people from their ſins—from the guilt, niſhment of their ſins—and confer upon them vation. And in the ſame view we often , "He who believeth on me hath everlaſting ill raiſe him up at the laſt day," that the body and ſoul, may ſhare the bleſſings of

day, in the 25th of Matthew, from the 31ſt verſe, where our contemplations are led forward to that day when we are to look for him, deſcending from heaven in all his divine and mediatorial glory, attended with the ſhining orders of angelic hoſts, and, having ſeated himſelf upon a throne of judgment, giving orders to miniſtering ſpirits to aſſemble the world of mankind before him, when he will with authority ſentence or acquit, condemn or ſave, according as they have or have not cloſed with the propoſals of peace which he or his ambaſſadors in his name have made to them, and witneſſed the ſincerity of their faith in, and obedience to, the goſpel, by well-directed acts of charity and benevolence; ſaying, "Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world;" and to thoſe of an oppoſite character, "Depart, ye curſed, into everlaſting puniſhment, prepared for the devil and his angels." Thus I have ſhewn you what we are to think of Chriſt as mediator, qualified for the work, and commiſſioned to execute it.

I am next to ſhew, that he has faithfully diſcharged all the duties of a mediator which belonged to his ſtate of humiliation, and is now continually diſcharging thoſe which belong to his ſtate of exaltation.

And it is a delightful truth, that he cheerfully ſubmitted to ſuſtain and ſupport, with honour and fidelity, thoſe characters, and to act in thoſe offices, which were neceſſary to fit and qualify him for executing that work; and that he has faithfully performed all which properly belonged to his ſtate of humiliation, and which we can ſuppoſe were neceſſary to obtain and ſecure final ſalvation for ſinful men.—And this I ſhall endeavour to illuſtrate in a few particulars.

1. He cheerfully undertook the great, the arduous and painful work. When the ſalvation of men became the

ſubject

nature; for, inaſmuch as the
took to conduct to glory were pa
he himſelf took part of the ſam
capable of yielding that obedien
of making that atonement to th
ven, which otherwi.e would ha
redemption of the ſoul is precio
forever, had not this propitiato
He therefore aſſumed a mortal
ſomewhat to offer; he ſubmitte
law, to which he was under no
ſubject; he was obedient to h
laws; he voluntarily aſſumed an
of a ſon, a ſubject, and a ſervant,
ing and patiently ſuffering, he m
in an everlaſting righteouſneſs, v
all things. He alſo received the
the Holy Ghoſt, which perfe
which fitted and qualified him,
God a ſacrifice which ſhould ma
of man.

blood;" and the apoſtle John ſays, "the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin, and he is become the author and finiſher of eternal ſalvation for us."

To this end I have to obſerve, that he has done all which we can imagine was neceſſary for him to do, in the ſtate of humiliation, in order to effect and ſecure our final ſalvation. He left his Father's court, he came down to act as the Immanuel on earth, ſuſpended for a while the ineffable glories of his divinity, and took upon him the form of a ſervant. Being found in faſhion as a man, he ſubmitted to the infirmities, inconveniences and ſorrows of mortal life, and at laſt to a painful death; for he became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, that he might atone to the injured juſtice of God, and purchaſe forfeited happineſs for man, and furniſh him with thoſe endearing motives and conſiderations, which might powerfully engage him to holy love and obedience—conſiderations and motives drawn from his unparalleled love and goodneſs, which conſtrain to undiſſembled love and obedience, more ſtrongly than thoſe which are drawn merely from reaſon or future rewards: for love is ſtrong as death, and in many inſtances, eſpecially in days of primitive chriſtianity, it has proved to be ſtronger; for they counted not their lives dear unto them, ſo that they might win Chriſt, and finiſh their courſe with joy. Many cheerfully reſigned life, when they could no longer hold it conſiſtently with their fidelilty to their divine Maſter, and ſubmitted to death in all its moſt horrid forms, rather than do any thing unworthy the love they bore to their dear Redeemer. This love animated and conſtrained them to reſiſt unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin.

Having finiſhed his embaſſy on earth, and cloſed the ſcene of his labours and ſufferings, he at length returned to his Father, that he might appear in the preſence of God for us; where he reſides, making continual interceſſion

for

s leads us to obſerve—that he has done, and
y doing, what belongs to his ſtate of exalta-
eceſſary to effect and ſecure eternal ſalvation
who believe.

re to view him in a very different character,
g chiefly in his prieſtly office, though he
end his prophetic or kingly offices; for he is
by his word, by his miniſters, and by his
s a prieſt on his throne, ruling in the king-
re, providence and grace. He is yet inveſted
ver, both in heaven and in earth, and will
has ſubdued all things to himſelf, and ob-
l conqueſt over his enemies, of the apoſtate
oſtate men, and ſafely conducted all his faith-
lory, and ſettled all the affairs of his media-
om; then he ſhall reſign the kingdom unto
nd God ſhall be *All in All*. He ſhall no lon-



ferings upon it. To this the practice of the high under the moſaic law had reference, and was typi- t: for the high prieſt, on the day of expiation, car- e blood of the burnt-offering and the blood of the ring into the holy place, and ſprinkled the blood the Lord there, by this to make atonement. And ır Lord Jeſus Chriſt carried his human body into , the holy ſanctuary above—that very body which fered up on the croſs as a ſin-offering—and pre- virtually, the blood which he ſhed upon the croſs, inkles it before the mercy-ſeat; for, as the Apoſtle es it, in alluſion to the practice of the high prieſt the diſpenſation of the levitical law, "Not by the of bulls and of goats, but by his own moſt pre- lood, he hath entered into the holy place, having ed eternal redemption for us." And now the very ance of the human body of Chriſt in heaven, with rks of his ſufferings for ſin upon it, is a ſilent but owerful plea in our favour: and for this purpoſe epreſented, in the viſion to John, as ſtanding in the of the throne, ſhewing himſelf as the Lamb ſlain e away the ſin of the world; and this is a language forcible than words can expreſs. The power of nd of ſilent but virtual interceſſion has been ſome- ſeen and felt in human courts; as once at Athens, Æſchylus was condemned as a ſtate criminal, his r, coming into the Areopagus juſt as the ſentence th was pronounced on him, without ſaying a word, out the ſtump of his right arm from under his (having loſt his right hand in that very action in he was the principal means of ſaving his country) with a fixed countenance, which denoted a mixture of and compaſſion, preſented it to the whole bench; dges were ſo ſtruck with a grateful remembrance heroiſm and his irreparable loſs, that they, without reverſed the ſentence they has juſt before paſſed,

and

ſet the priſoner free. Thus does Chri
author) our elder brother, ſilently bu
d for our forfeited lives, by preſentin
y, which was wounded for our tranſg
ſed for our iniquities; and ſuch is the
nce, that his Holy Father (to ſpeak afte
nen) looks on the marks of his ſuffering
what he has done, and reverſes the ſe
one forth againſt the ſinner, and ſets hi
uage of ſuch ſilent interceſſion is this:
y Father, behold me in the form of e
, and remember for what purpoſe I to
remember what I have ſuffered: th
, waſt witneſs of that awful ſcene; n
et this blood, which was once offered t
croſs, nor how freely it was offered, to
holy law, to appeaſe thy incenſed wrath

thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thruſt it into my ſide, and be not faithleſs, but believing." And I do not know why we may not ſuppoſe that he makes uſe of his refined human voice, and his glorified human tongue, with the organs of ſpeech, both in forming and enforcing a plea in favour of his church and people, whom he repreſents in his Father's court in heaven. He expreſsly told his diſciples, that when he ſhould aſcend to his Father he would pray him to ſend them another comforter, who ſhould abide with them, and teach them all things. However, be this as it may, we are certain that, in whatever manner this interceſſion is made, it is in the beſt and moſt effectual manner—worthy the exalted Redeemer, and effectual to the ſalvation of ſinful men.

When the Bleſſed Jeſus was on earth, we are told that he offered up ſtrong *cries*, with tears; ſometimes when he addreſſed his Heavenly Father it was in the humble form of a bended knee, ſometimes proſtrate on his face: but now all tears are wiped away; ſorrow and abaſement are no more. Such humble forms now would be indecent, not being agreeable to his preſent ſtate of exaltation; therefore he is repreſented to us as *ſitting down* on the right hand of the Divine Majeſty while he performs this part of his prieſtly office. He is now a *prieſt on his throne*, and his addreſs is princely—Father, I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, and ſhare in my joy.

Therefore, if we would form right apprehenſions of Chriſt's interceding in heaven, it muſt be, not in that humble form he made uſe of when in the garden of Gethſemane, but in that dignified attitude to which he is aſſended, where he ſits, and will ſit, till he has made all enemies his footſtool. And, as it is in a manner thy his high dignity, ſo it is effectual to procure the things he intercedes for.

nant of redemption to beſtow. A
could, for himſelf and for all th
challenge, and exultingly ſay, "
to the charge of God's elect? it
rather, who is riſen again from th
interceſſion for us." If we beli
ſincere intentions, and upright diſ
pleaſing God in all things, our
vindicate our character from ever
plead his own righteouſneſs, and
ſufferings, as a full anſwer to th
not be denied: and, though we
perfect creatures that nothing pr
the ſtains of moral pollution, and
forgiveneſs, rather than merit
angel who ſtands before the thron
it, offers up the prayers of the ſai
which renders both their perſon
ſervices acceptable.

In one word—The interceſſion
to procure all neceſſary bleſſings

Thus I have finished what I proposed, of the mediatorial character of Jesus Christ, and shewn what apprehensions we should form of him, under this singular character of mediator between God and man—the God-man Christ Jesus.——I close with a few remarks.

When we consider the Lord Jesus under the endearing character of our intercessor, how amiable does he appear! And what an honour is done him in the heavenly world, when God will not accept of the very best services of his saints, unless perfumed by his merits, and presented by him, and yet will accept of the meanest and the vilest sinner for his sake, if truly penitent and believing! How amiable does he appear, that, amidst all the glories of his Father's throne, the acclamations and ascriptions of the heavenly hosts, he does not forget his servants here below, but watches over them with a compassionate eye, guides them by his Spirit, and defends them by his power and providence, and has promised that he will ever have an ear open to hear their cry, and a mouth ready to plead their cause, and to recommend their poor, broken and imperfect services to the acceptance of his Heavenly Father! Well might we be filled with wonder and pleasing astonishment, to behold the blessed Jesus condescending to wear the fallen nature of man, and in that nature obey, suffer and die for us, and then to rise from the dead, and ascend to his Father, and through him to our Father, to his God and our God, and there to appear as our advocate, pleading the cause of sinful men in the court of heaven, ever living, making intercession for us.

But, upon a general view of what you have read, let me ask you, What think you of Christ? whose son is he? Are those divine and incommunicable attributes, of which I have proved him possessed, the property of any mere son of Adam, or of any other created parent? Who among the sons of the mighty can be compared to him,

who

ſcient, eternal, immutable, omnipreſent and
Surely it would be a kind of blaſphemy, after
ble evidence as has been offered of his divine
ink him any other than the Son of the Moſt
And, though we are not able to deſcribe
n, yet let us, in a tranſport of holy joy and
ove and obedience, cry out with Thomas,
and my God."

ly, when we view the works of creation,
and grace, all which are aſcribed to him,
e think of him, but that he is an almighty
racious Saviour, able to ſave to the utmoſt all
nto God by him? He who made worlds, and
l governs them by his wiſdom, power and
t fail to ſuccour and ſave thoſe who properly
ſt in him. Surely we may with the utmoſt

ne, or rather your own conſcience, upon the evidence you ave received, this ſhort queſtion—What think you of Chriſt? whoſe ſon is he? Is he a perſon to be ridiculed r inſulted? Are his doctrines, his laws, or the propoſals f peace, as publiſhed in his goſpel, to be diſregarded? Do you know what you do when you diſobey this Saiour—when you neglect that ſalvation which he has rought out? By oppoſing his cauſe you oppoſe the uthority of a king—the authority of a God. You vainy and madly ſet yourſelves againſt a power which s irreſiſtible; you attempt to fruſtrate his beneficent deigns who called the univerſe into being, and commands ll nature into obedience, and can cruſh worlds into othing, and damn his enemies, infinitely eaſier than we an break a bubble or bruiſe a moth. And this mighty eing will ere long deſcend from heaven with his angels, nd ſummon all the human race before him: where then, O where, will the ungodly and the ſinner appear! what will you do in the day thereof (and the great day of his wrath will come) you who have paid him no regard, you who have not given him a fair hearing, nor his gracious propoſals a candid or impartial examination—never publicly owned him for your lord and maſter, nor obeyed his plain, eaſy and poſitive commands! Where will you fly, or to which of his ſaints or angels will you turn! Or what excuſe could you make, if your Saviour ſhould even now rend the heavens and come down, and ſummon you before his awful tribunal! Think, O think ſeriouſly, of theſe things, before the archangel ſound the laſt trumpet, or, which is all one to you, before death executes his commiſſion upon you, and puts it out of your power ſo much as to hope for ſalvation.

I muſt entreat you to ſit down and call in your ſcattered thoughts, and contemplate the perſonal glories of the bleſſed Jeſus, his divine and amiable character, his benefi- ent deſigns, the reaſonableneſs and the pure morali-

they conſider in whom they have be
they have built their eternal hopes, an
have committed their moſt important
whom they have lodged the ſalvation o
ſouls, they muſt rejoice with a joy unſpe
glory. But, while you rejoice in your
gracious Saviour, let it be the higheſt p
bition to live worthy the character of c
of him whoſe diſciples you are. Keep
him as your polar ſtar, and ſteer your c
by his unerring example: let all your e
in him, and derive all you peace and ho
then, when he who is your light ſhall
be like him, and appear with him in gl
fountains of living waters, and all te
away forever. AMEN.

Diſcourſe III.

ıe Perſonality and Operations of the Holy Ghost.

ACTS xix. 2.

ſaid unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye elieved? And they ſaid unto him, We have not ſo much as eard whether there be any Holy Ghoſt.

PAUL, the great apoſtle to the gentiles, in proſe- cuting the work of the miniſtry, which he had eived, not of men, neither by men, but by immediate elation from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, paſſed through latia, Phrygia, and Leſſer Aſia, and came to the cele- ated city Epheſus, where he made ſome ſtay. While was preaching there the goſpel of the Bleſſed God, he und a number of devout perſons, in whom appeared me of thoſe miraculous gifts which had been beſtowed on thoſe chriſtians where he had before been; to whom addreſſed himſelf in the words of my text: "Have ye eived the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed? And they ſaid, e have not ſo much as heard whether there be any Holy hoſt:"—Which queſtion and anſwer we are to under- and thus: 'Have ye received thoſe extraordinary gifts Holy Ghoſt, ſince ye embraced the chriſtian faith, f tongues, prophecies, healing, &c.? and they We are ſuch ſtrangers to theſe things, that we have

much as heard, with any certainty, whether
Ghoſt has been any where ſhed forth in ſuch
inary manner, as to diſtinguiſh the preſent or
penſation from the moſaic.' Paul ſeemed to
at their anſwer, and aſked into what baptiſm
en baptized; they ſaid, into John's, in token
ntance, and their embracing the new diſpen-
r the reign of the Meſſiah, in whom they be-
to whom they ſubmitted upon the teſtimony
Baptiſt. And, as the form of John's baptiſm
t from that which was afterwards uſed by
, not being the chriſtian baptiſm, nor in the
Holy Ghoſt, ſo they had not been led into
particular ſentiment about the Holy Ghoſt,
tions, different from what had been taught
the writings of the Old Teſtament. They
t John teſtified concerning Jeſus, believed in

From the words thus explained, with their connexion with the context, we may infer this general truth—That there may be ſome ſincere chriſtians who may need further inſtruction in the perſonality, character and operations of the Holy Ghoſt.

In the full belief of this general truth, I ſhall in the enſuing diſcourſe treat of the perſon, character and operations of the Holy Spirit, called in my text the Holy Ghoſt, in as plain, clear and conciſe a manner as I can; in ſuch a manner as I hope may reflect honour on that goſpel of which the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and his operations makes ſo diſtinguiſhing a part.

I. I am to treat of the Perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt. The Holy Ghoſt is that Divine Spirit who in the triune Deity is diſtinct in his perſonality both from the Father and the Son, though of one undivided eſſence with both. He is almoſt every where ſpoken of as a diſtinct perſon, in the Sacred Oracles, as proceeding from the Father and the Son. Jeſus told his diſciples, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he ſhall teſtify of me;" and adds, "The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my name, he ſhall teach you all things." From theſe paſſages it plainly appears that the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, and the Holy Ghoſt, are one and the ſame perſon, diſtinct both from the Father and the Son: and he is ſpoken of as proceeding from heaven to earth upon the moſt gracious errand both from the Father and the Son, but in their name. Agreeably to this the Bleſſed Saviour comforted his diſciples with ſaying, "It is expedient that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart (or when I depart) I will ſend him unto you." It is plain from theſe paſſages, as almoſt every other in the ſacred writings, where-

in



in the Holy Spirit is directly spoken of, and he is a distinct person, to whom personality is to be ascribed equally as to the Father or the Son. And agreeable to this is that singular passage in 1. John, v. 7: "There are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word (or the Son) and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." I close the arguments from Scripture with the doxology of the Apostle in the close of his second epistle to the Corinthians: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."

II. I am next to speak of his Divine Character. And the Holy Ghost is a divine person, equally possessed of all the natural and moral perfections of the Deity. This is evident also from the Scriptures, where equal honour and divinity are ascribed to him, and an equal regard required of us, as to the Father and the Son.

1. The name GOD is in the Hebrew plural, [Elohim] and denotes a plurality of persons in one undivided essence. And this is the name whereby God makes himself known, and which comprehends the Trinity, and is in a peculiar manner expressive of Deity: and it is made use of in almost every verse of the first chapter of the Bible, where the sacred Historian has given us a short account of the works of creation, in which the whole Trinity, and each person, is equally concerned. And, that the agency of the Holy Ghost might appear very evident, it is particularly observed, in the 2d verse of the 1st chapter of Genesis, that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The word, translated *moved*, in the original Hebrew signifies, *an exertion of prolific or productive power*, collecting, forming and animating individuals out of a liquid, wild and confused cha
expressive of creative power—an evidence of d

2. The divinity of the Holy Ghoſt further appears, om the works of creation being particularly aſcribed to im in Scripture. It was by his almighty agency that ıe wild chaos was productive of innumerable real dividual exiſtences; for it is obſervable, that, when e Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and ıd exerted his creative and prolific power, that the Deity ined in one voice, ſaying, "Let there be light, and ıere was light:" ſo that in the very firſt productions in ır world, creative power was aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt. ılſo when man, the maſter-piece of this lower creation, as to receive real exiſtence, each of the perſons in the 'riune Diety was equally concerned in his formation; ıerefore it was ſaid, "Let us make man"—let us make im after our own image. It follows that the likeneſs of he three muſt be the ſame—the brightneſs of each thers' glory, and the expreſs image of each others' perons. If the image of each perſon was eſſentially the ſame, hen each was eſſentially divine, and equally concerned n the works of creation.

His divinity is not only [illegible]guable from the exertion of his ıgency in the firſt productions from ancient chaos, but from his agency in the reſtoration of man to the divine image in which he was firſt created, but which he loſt in the early apoſtacy. This reſtoration is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghoſt. And as it is a new creation, or a renovation of primitive form, ſo it is highly reaſonable to ſuppoſe a renovation, or a reſtoration to primitive form, ſhould be effected by the ſame hand which gave [illegible] form. And the Spirit is generally conſidered in [illegible]ripture as the author of this ſpiritual renovation: for [illegible] who are reſtored to the divine image are ſaid to be [illegible] new in Chriſt Jeſus, after the image of God, in [illegible]ge, righteouſneſs, and true holineſs; and theſe [illegible] be born of the Spirit. Agreeably to this, the [illegible] when celebrating the honour of the Creator, ſings,

the word of the Lord were the heavens made,
hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth;" i. e.
rit of Jehovah, who in the New Teſtament
d the Holy Ghoſt.

ivine character of the Holy Ghoſt is vindicat-
her works aſcribed to him, which are on all
owledged to be the works of God only: for in-
ration, which enables men to foretel future
great exactneſs, even events the accompliſh-
hich ſeemed entirely to depend upon con-
umſtances. Theſe men are ſaid to be inſpired
Even Nebuchadnezzar allowed that Daniel
foretel future events, unleſs the ſpirit of the
was in him. But we are aſſured that the
m of divine revelation was given by inſpira-
God, and is profitable; and yet it is ſaid that

4. Another argument in ſupport of the divinity of the Holy Ghoſt may be drawn from the Apoſtle's ſaying, that believers, in whom he dwelt, were for that reaſon the temple of God: "Know ye not," aſked the Apoſtle, (he ſpeaks of it as a thing well known, and acknowledged by all the children of God) "that ye are the temple of God? for the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." If the Spirit of God dwelling in the heart of believers makes them the temples of God, then the Holy Ghoſt is God; for it is the God dwelling in them that makes them the temples of God.

5. I think it is an argument in favour of the divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, that the ſin againſt him is ſaid to be unpardonable. We can hardly conceive that all manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be pardonable, except blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt, if the Holy Ghoſt has not a juſt claim to divine honours. That a ſin againſt a being who has neither diſtinct perſonality, nor any juſt claim to divinity, ſhould be unpardonable, when all manner of ſin and blaſphemy committed againſt God or his divine Son ſhall be forgiven, is what we cannot comprehend. Beſides, the manner in which this ſin is ſpoken of by the evangeliſts conveys the idea both of perſonality and divinity; "Whoſoever ſhall ſpeak a word againſt the Son of Man, it ſhall be forgiven him; but whoſoever ſhall ſpeak a word againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Whoſoever ſhall read this verſe with an unprejudiced mind, will conclude that the Holy Ghoſt, the object againſt whom this ſin is committed, is a perſon diſtinct from the Son of Man, and poſſeſſed equally of a divine character; nay, the heinous and unpardonable nature of it implies both perſonality and divinity in the object againſt whom the ſin is committed. Its unpardonability lies in a malicious and voluntary reſiſtance of

had only attempted to impose upon the
on those who were under his influen
falsehood. Herein (said the Apostle) t
lyed unto men, and endeavoured to im
apostles, and the church under our c
lyed unto God. Now it is certain that th
believe the Holy Ghost to be God, or
cating in this matter would not be lyi
view, more than any other breach of tru

Thus it appears, from arguments fi
passages of Scripture, in expres terms
consequences drawn from their most ol
the personality and divinity of the Hol
trine well founded. And indeed the wh
ture is, to pay him divine honours. T
as the infallible *guide*, whose office is, to
knowledge of all necessary truth, and to
sorts of religious gifts, and christian g
Holy Ghost who strengthens the believ
temptations; it is the Holy Ghost who
ports the saints under all their trial

nd is therefore omnipotent, for this is ſaid to be
ertion of the exceeding greatneſs of the mighty
of God. It was the Holy Ghoſt who ſpoke in
phets and apoſtles. It was the Holy Ghoſt who
l the primitive chriſtians with thoſe miraculous
hich enabled them to underſtand at once the whole
of revealed truth—to diſcern the hearts of men,
ſpeak at once clearly and properly in languages
ngues they had never learnt: one of the moſt ſur-
miracles and events that was ever heard of in the
and which will ſtand, a demonſtration of divine
when time and ſublunary things will be forgot.

ſe the argument with obſerving, that, from a full
ion of the divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, and that un-
l honours ſhould be paid to the Father, Son and
Ghoſt, it was not unuſual for the apoſtles to cloſe
iſtles with this doxology and apoſtolic benediction
grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the love of God
ther, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be
ou all. Amen.*

re we paſs to ſpeak of the operations of the Holy
we ſhall infer a few things from what has been al-
obſerved; as—

We may infer, That divine honour and homage is
m us men to the Holy Ghoſt. If he is a divine
then divine honour and homage is due from us,
m he condeſcends to dwell, for the moſt honoura-
d beneficent purpoſe—that he might conſecrate us
s of God: for we are bound to render to all their
honour to whom honour is due—to give unto
the things which are Cæſar's, and to God the
which are God's—to give unto God the glory due
unto

* For further illuſtration of the doctrine, read Iſ. lxiii. 14,
7—10, connected with Pſalm xcv. 67, 2 Corinthians,
Sam. xxiii. 1—3. They fully hold up the idea of the
ity and divinity of the Holy Ghoſt.

to his great name. But then, agreeabl
ution of the covenant of grace, our addre
not to be directly or personally made
oft, but, according to the order eſtabliſh
, we are to pray for the pardon of ſin, th
our perſons, the ſanctification of our natu
vation, to the Father, through the Son,
d graces of the Holy Spirit, all which orig
e of God, and are become the purchaſe
nveyed to the minds of men, through th
ine revelation, by the operations and inf
oly Ghoſt, upon a mediatorial plan. Agr
r Saviour told his diſciples, that when th
uld come, he would lead them into all t
eive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you:
ing that ſubordination which the Holy S

operates upon the human heart, forming it anew, breaking down the evil and vicious habits, delivering from spiritual darkness and the power of a carnal mind, implanting divine principles in, and renewing the divine image upon, the soul, yet restoring the happy freedom of the mind, and doing honour to human moral agency. Let us adore him as that blessed agent who begets us again to a lively hope by the word of God, and carries on his own work till that which is perfect shall come, when that which is in part shall be done away.

3. We infer, That we ought to make it a very important part of our daily addresses to Heaven, that we may have the Holy Ghost imparted to us, with all those gracious influences which are essential to the well-being of religion: for sure I am, that where these are not, there are none of the comforts, delights, and peculiar advantages, of a religious life. We must be careful that we do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption; either by indulging the inordinate cares of the world, by neglecting duty, accompanying with idle, vain or wicked persons, or by relapsing into sin, and thereby quenching his motions—be sure to cultivate and cherish every good impression: for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.—Having observed these things, as natural inferences from what has been said of the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, we pass, as was proposed, to speak—

III. Of the *Operations* of the Holy Ghost. And these, I think, may, for the sake of order, be divided into *common*, *saving* and *special*. But, to avoid confusion, we would premise, that the Holy Ghost being a divine person, his operations, in the sacred style, are sometimes called indifferently the operations of [illegible] the Holy Ghost is sometimes called the Spirit of God, sometimes the Spirit

d ſometimes the Spirit, by way of eminence. Paul, addreſſing himſelf to the believing Ro- 'But ye are not in the fleſh, but in the Spirit, of God dwell in you;" and, "If you have t of Chriſt, you are none of his." Here you ame perſon, who is the Holy Ghoſt, is called e Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Chriſt.

now proceed to ſpeak of the operations of irit, under thoſe three diviſions, *common, ſav- ial.*

mmon operations of the Holy Ghoſt we take of an *afflatus Numine*, or a divine inſpiration dif- mon through the human race, which lays a raint upon the luſts of men, fixes a curb up- ptions of the human heart, and maintains a tinction between right and wrong, virtue and

[redacted]

most discerning among the heathen philosophers and sages. Some said, "Men cannot resemble the gods in goodness, till the gods first form that resemblance; and we cannot come to God till he first leads into the for all virtue in men is by the assistance and agency of the gods." And another said, "We must pray to the gods to guide our reason, for none of us can act reasonably but by the assistance of the gods:" and a third affirms, that "virtue is not the work of mortals, but the gift of the gods; and if a man was placed in the midst between virtue and vice, he would need the influence of the gods to enable him to choose virtue." Now to the united testimony of these three pagan philosophers we may subjoin that from the christian oracle—"Not that we are of ourselves sufficient to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." And indeed it is owing to these divine influences and operations that men are humane, civil, moral, or virtuous; it is these which essentially distinguish fallen men from fallen angels. It is these which render fallen men the proper subjects of salvation; mankind being under these common influences, reason and conscience make strong remonstrances against sinful actions, and evil propensities. And this opposition, in every man's breast, to every species of immorality, though so feeble, yet is the real effect and consequence of the common influences of the Holy Ghost: and men do not sin, nor continue long under conscious guilt, without feeling some remorse, some uneasy reflections, until those common influences are withdrawn: then and not till then, can we sin without restraint, or with full self-approbation and applause.

[redacted] these common influences of the Blessed Spirit assist [illegible] awaken conscience, and are, in the phrase of inspiration, that candle of the Lord which is light in the [illegible] vine light, something more than the mere dictates

nan reaſon and nature, left to itſelf, under
the apoſtacy; they direct the mind to that
od—inſpire with a deſire to perform that
d: but how to perform we find not. Yet
aſſiſt nature and reaſon, but are not ſufficient
or to withſtand the prevalency of indwelling
they keep the mind open, and ſuſceptible of
tions, and are neceſſary to render fallen and
the proper ſubject of them. Therefore it is
ous to reſiſt, ſtifle or quench this coal, kept
e common influence of the Holy Ghoſt.
ave that caution of our divine Lord—Take
e light which is in thee be not darkneſs.

divine operations, common to all mankind,
ndered beneficial to man, morality is kept
world, and mankind are continued in a ſtate
vation is poſſible; and ſo are delivered from,

they fairly imply. When ſpeaking of thoſe common influences upon the hearts of the gentiles, he ſays, "For when the gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, they ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſciences the mean while accuſing or excuſing one another:" which words at leaſt carry ſo much in them as this—that the gentile nations, though they had not the written law of God revealed to them, yet had ſuch divine impreſſions made upon their minds as were ſufficient to awaken their conſciences, to accuſe them of guilt when they did that which was contrary to the revealed laws of God, and to excuſe or approve of them when they did thoſe things which the law requires. Now thoſe impreſſions which wrote the law of God upon the hearts of the gentiles, were undoubtedly from the Spirit of God, whoſe buſineſs it is to write the law of God upon the hearts of the children of men, agreeable to the prophecy of Jeremiah when ſpeaking of new covenant bleſſings to be more plentifully enjoyed under the reign of the Meſſiah: "After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people."

We come now more directly to ſpeak of the *ſaving* operations of the Holy Ghoſt. Theſe we take to be ſome ſtronger impreſſions made upon the intellectual powers of the mind, which alter the diſpoſition, and moſt powerfully perſuade the whole man to chooſe and purſue the noble purpoſes of godlineſs.

In theſe operations, the underſtanding is the power which is in general the firſt impreſſed; the conſequence is, the perſon is brought ſeriouſly to conſider with himſelf. It is allowed by all, that ſerious conſideration is the firſt ſtep to ſound converſion.

The

The ſettling of the ſentiments, and the balancing of the mind with religious principles, muſt be the reſult of ſober thought, and ſerious inquiry; as the Pſalmiſt obſerves, that the thinking on his ways was previous to the changing of his ſentiments: "I thought on my ways," ſaith he, "and then I turned my feet into thy teſtimonies; I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." The underſtanding being deeply impreſſed, the ſoul entertains other apprehenſions of the Great God: his power and his preſence, his purity and patience, his goodneſs and mercy, ſtrike the mind, arreſt the fugitive thoughts, and he conſiders with himſelf, "I am not only a creature of God, but I am naked and open before an infinitely pure and ever-preſent Deity; all the ſecrets of my ſoul are fully known to that God who made me and daily ſupports me: he has ever obſerved my conduct in every particular of paſt life: he knows both the folly and plague of my heart, the depravity of my nature, and the treachery of my very inmoſt ſoul: for there has not been a word on my tongue, nor a thought in my heart, but lo, O Lord, thou haſt known it altogether." The awakened ſinner conſiders alſo, that this God, in whoſe preſence he has acted ſo unworthily, ſo wickedly, is not a man, who is a worm, nor the ſon of man, who is but a worm, but the omnipotent JEHOVAH, who can with infinite eaſe make him miſerable, or nothing, in a moment, or bring him to the duſt of death, or to the flames of hell. And the thought is preſſed home, and addreſſes the heart in the language of the prophet Nathan to David—"Thou art the man"—'thou, a poor feeble worm, haſt been daily offending the great God of heaven and earth, making him thy almighty enemy!'

From an impreſſive ſenſe of the power and preſence of the great and bleſſed God, the Holy Ghoſt leads the awakened ſinner to conſider of his purity and patience; and he can no longer treat the immaculate JEHOVAH with irreverence

ence and diſregard, but reveres him as the *Holy Ghoſt*; and he begins to feel himſelf in the preſence God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, is ready to cry out, Who can ſtand before this holy, holy Lord God!—this God who muſt in all its forms, and is therefore angry with the every day, and muſt be very angry with me: O why! have I not before this time felt the of his diſpleaſure!

leads the concerned ſinner to admire the wonder- ture of God. He wonders at his own preſump- at he has ever dared to affront ſuch power, to of- ch purity, and to abuſe ſuch patience; and that, this, he is yet among the living to praiſe God. ks around on the world, who lie in ignorance and nefs, and conſiders what a great part are blaſphe- he God of heaven, violating the plaineſt dictates and the precepts of morality, and living in an al- tire forgetfulneſs of the God who made them. He es himſelf as one of thoſe who have added to the the ſum of moral guilt, and wonders that the great h bears with the ingratitude and rebellion of his mpotent and apoſtate creatures—that he has not this time clothed himſelf with majeſty, and made th known by the thunders of his power, and in a punished the folly and madneſs of preſumptuous s, and cruſhed the world and its inhabitants into Yet, inſtead of this, he ſees the patience of God ent to long ſuffering: for he cauſes his ſun to his rain to deſcend, on the evil and on the un- and is kind and gracious, inviting the chief of the participation of heavenly bleſſings; which ntinued demonſtration, ſuch a ſenſible proof, eſt goodneſs and tender mercy of God, as a ſort of venerable delight, and encourages future to repoſe himſelf with a cheerful con-

fidence

uch paternal goodneſs and unceaſing kindneſs.
effive apprehenſions of the power and purity,
d patience, the goodneſs and mercy, of God,
e awakened ſinner to conſider him as the God
s of all fleſh, who has immediate acceſs to
oul, and that the hearts of all men are in his
hat he can manage them as he pleaſes; work-
n both to will and to do his own good plea-
efore, though he feels himſelf dark, impotent,
d, yet he feels that he is at the ſame time a
ivine agency, and that all he needs to illumi-
k mind—that all he wants to cure the diſor-
ſoul, and to heal every internal diſeaſe—to
the nobler forms of divine life, and to final
te happineſs—is, to have, and ſenſibly to en-
ard, the vital, operative preſence of the Di-
—that holy Spirit of God by whom we are

that I have lived as without God in the world, and as if my body was immortal, and my ſoul mortal, and as if the things which are ſeen were eternal, and the things which are not ſeen were temporal: I am condemned by all the creatures above, around and below me; all of whom anſwer the end of their being much better than I: I am condemned by the law of my Creator, who, being the firſt cauſe and laſt end of all things, deſerves my firſt, my beſt, my all: "I am aſhamed, and even confounded, and abhor myſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes." But I ſee, I plainly ſee, that neither the deepeſt ſelf-abaſement and abhorrence, the bittereſt repentance, nor the moſt impartial reformation for the future, will atone for the paſt, nor reverſe the ſentence which has been already pronounced againſt me: nor will theſe humiliations and reformations of themſelves mortify and purge out thoſe evil inclinations, vicious habits, and untoward diſpoſitions, which ſtill prevail in me, and which will effectually prevent my future happineſs, even though I were delivered from the puniſhment due to me for ſin. Oh! what ſhall I then do! where, O where ſhall I fly! Be willing to be miſerable I cannot; to free myſelf from the certain or fearful expectation of it, in exiſting circumſtances, is equally impoſſible. I have no wiſdom to deviſe, I have no ſtrength to effect, my own ſalvation. What ſhall I do! where ſhall I find a friendly hand able to ſave me! where ſhall I find a rock firm enough to build my eternal hopes upon!

The Holy Ghoſt, by calling up ſuch reflections as theſe, prepares the convinced ſinner to take a more intimate and ſelf-applying view of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his mediatorial character. He is fully convinced that he cannot ſtand before the infinitely holy Lord God. He looks out for help, and, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, he looks into the goſpel, where he ſees as in a

he glory of the Lord Jesus—the displays of
om and grace shining in his face: and he
ins quite different thoughts and sentiments
ious person, who is "the brightness of the
ry, and the express image of his person—the
n of the Father, full of grace and truth."
xalted and endearing apprehensions of the
Christ powerfully strike the mind, and capti-
rt. The judgment being informed, the af-
e with ardour spontaneously towards him, as
with whom he has the most important, inte-
personal concern. Under a realizing sense of
rable state without grace and Christ, while he
ls himself under the condemning power of
under a moral inability to fulfil its require-
yet neither able to plead innocence, or to make
the convinced sinner attends to the gospel pro-

imperfection of his beſt obedience: and under theſe views he highly approves of the way and method of ſalvation by grace, through faith, as revealed in the goſpel. The heart being thus prepared, it does, as it were of itſelf, open, melt, cloſe, unite with, and cordially receive, the Lord Jeſus, as offered in the goſpel, as the moſt ſuitable, moſt amiable, almighty and all-gracious Saviour, worthy of ſupreme love, and inexpreſſible complacency; and, while others are deviſing means to be rich and great, he deſires above all things to be found in Chriſt, intereſted in his atonement, clothed with his righteouſneſs, filled with his Spirit, and to be found humbly and ſteadily walking in all the ſtatutes and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs. He hears the invitations of the goſpel with pleaſure, and comes at the Saviour's call, and attends to the doctrines, the precepts and the example of his Lord and Maſter, with an obedient ear, and a complying heart: and, while he receives his Saviour into his heart, and reſts his ſalvation in his hands, he ſincerely ſubſcribes to his laws, doctrines and inſtitutions, and caſts anchor within the vail, and in the way of well-doing ſeeks for glory, honour and immortality, in hopes that he ſhall have the crown of eternal life conferred upon him, as the free gift of God, through Jeſus Chriſt his Lord. And now, being delivered from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, he cheerfully bows to his authority, and puts, as it were, both the ſword and the ſceptre into his hands, and yields up the whole empire of his ſoul, to be governed by his laws, controuled by his power, ſanctified by his Spirit, cheriſhed by his truth and grace, and finally ſaved by his righteouſneſs. He ſettles, too, a correſpondence with his Saviour, under the influences of the ſame Spirit, which he purpoſes ſhall never be interrupt-

and is delighted, and even tranſported, with the pleaſ-

proſpect which opens to his view, and is ready to

out, "Bleſſed Jeſus! thou art my light, my ſtrength,

my

3. We ſhall now take a view of the Holy Ghoſt which may be called

And by the ſpecial operations of th mean the ſame which in the Scriptures ply of the Spirit of Chriſt Jeſus, wh neceſſary to animate the believer to th of duty, to ſupport him under his t againſt temptation, to ſubdue the bod to ſanctify and attemper him to the e ployments of the heavenly world. T in Scripture the *ſealings* of the Spirit Spirit, and the *witneſs* of the Spirit wit proves that we are the children of G many other phraſes of the like natur ences of the Holy Ghoſt are ſpoken o are conſidered every where as neceſſa chriſtian life: the ſame Spirit who on the good work to perfection. Th enkindled, muſt keep alive, the ſacred the Spirit who giveth life." And ev his own experience, ſenſible, or ſoon w

in the ſame point of view—that the preſent appre-
ons of God, of Chriſt, the ſoul, and the eternal world,
lways take the ſame hold of the heart, and equally
e the attention: but a little experience in the chriſ-
ife will convince them of their miſtake, and of the
of what our Bleſſed Lord told his diſciples, that
ut him they could do nothing.

eſe ſpecial operations of the Holy Ghoſt are free
overeign favours; not beſtowed upon all the children
d equally, nor on any one equally at all times, but
ergencies ariſe. Sometimes, through theſe ſpecial
tions, light has been imparted to the ſaints in the
t and moſt myſterious and perplexing caſes, and
ed them to acknowledge with the Pſalmiſt, "In thy
O God, I ſee light." So when his virtue was put
trial, by the unequal diſtribution of Providence, in
ower and proſperity of the wicked, and he felt him-
lunged into the depths of adverſity, and when he at-
ed to reconcile this with the wiſdom and goodneſs
: divine government, he ſays, It was too painful for
nd I was ready to conclude that I had cleanſed my
: in vain; but I went into the ſanctuary of God, and
underſtood I their way. He had a more extenſive
impartial view of God's providential government,
as ſatisfied; a ray of divine light broke through the
cloud, and carried its own evidence with it. Some-
ſpecial ſtrength is imparted, to bear with fortitude
ardens of life, which without would be quite in-
rtable: the apoſtle Paul could boaſt, under the hea-
burdens and the ſevereſt trials, I can do all things
gh Chriſt ſtrengthening me; and when I am weak—
moſt ſenſibly my own weakneſs—and burdens and
ities preſs the hardeſt, then am I ſtrong, being
ghened with all might according to his glorious
, unto all patience and long ſuffering, with joy-

So, on other ſpecial occaſions, ſpecial aſſiſtance
en communicated, yet in ſuch variety as to time
and degree, as plainly ſhews that they are fre
reign favours, under the direction and controu
Spirit. No one has directed, or being counſelle
ght, him when and where, and to what degree
l be conferred. The royal penitent, ſenſible o
he ſtood in of the ſpecial aids and aſſiſtances o
y Ghoſt, to recover him from his ſhameful fall
him from his guilt, and reſtore him to the com
religion, and eſtabliſh him in undecaying piet
uture, prayed, Lord reſtore unto me the joys o
tion, and uphold me by thy free Spirit. As th
perations of the Holy Ghoſt are free, variou
reign, ſo they are powerful and efficacious, ſuf
bear up and carry the feebleſt ſaint through the
afflictions, and the ſoreſt trials, with fortitude

quite diſtinct from thoſe blind impulſes and irregular ecſtacies of an over-heated imagination which are eccentric and wild, reducible to none of thoſe ſacred rules by which we are to try the ſpirit to ſee if it be of God, or that Holy Spirit of God by whom we are ſealed unto the day of redemption. And, though there may be a diverſity in theſe operations, yet they are by the ſame Spirit, and its adminiſtrations tend to the ſame thing—the edification of the believer, to make him meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the ſaints in light.

Having thus ſpoken of the Holy Ghoſt, and his various operations, we paſs to ſome improvement.

1. Let us adore this Divine Illuminator of our dark minds, and bleſs the Father of Lights for the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit, by whoſe common influences the ſad effects of the early apoſtacy are kept under a happy reſtraint, the moral agency of man is maintained, reaſon and conſcience are able to bear their united teſtimony againſt an evil deed, and to make a loud and ſometimes ſucceſsful remonſtrance againſt it; ſo that mankind retain a ſenſe of right and wrong, moral and immoral actions, upon the principles of common ſenſe; that humanity, civility and morality are kept alive in the world, which make this earth better than hell, and mankind better than fallen angels.

2. Let us bleſs God that he did not ſuffer the human race to ſink into a ſtate of abſolute deſperation, by totally withholding the influences of his Bleſſed Spirit, but graciouſly diffuſed his common influences as a kind of general *ſtatus*, by which he preſerved mankind proper ſubjects on whom the grace of God might operate, agreeably to his rational nature, to final ſalvation. But—

3. More eſpecially, let us adore and praiſe the Divine [illegible]ifier of our polluted natures, who regenerates us [illegible] ſpirit of our minds, and be always ready to acknowledge

owledge the operations of his hand, wher
ve them, in ourſelves or others, and g
nour which is manifeſtly his due; not
urſelves, nor aſcribe too much to means or
hich in any meaſure it has been in our po
r of, but ſay, Not unto us, O Lord, not un
y good Spirit, who has wrought in us both
do of thine own pleaſure, we aſcribe al
d all the praiſe.

4. Let us pray for the Spirit; we have
rangement which it is proper we ſhould
r the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; for he was
rift in the covenant of redemption; t
viour told his diſciples, when he was ab
em, that he would obtain the promiſe of

this way we attempt to work out our own ſalvation with fear and trembling, we muſt remember that it is God who by his Spirit works in us both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure.

6. We muſt not grieve nor quench the Holy Spirit of God. If, while we are in the uſe of any of the appointed means, we feel any ſerious impreſſions made upon the mind, let us be ſure to cultivate and improve ſuch impreſſions; attend to the ſacred dictates, and not be diverted by the ſolicitations of vain or wicked men; but retire to our cloſets, converſe with our own hearts, and attend and be obedient to what the Spirit ſaith unto them, though he ſhould ſpeak in his ſtill ſmall voice. Here give me leave to ſay, if you want human inſtruction and aſſiſtance, you will do well to confer with your miniſter, and with a few of the moſt ſerious, godly and prudent perſons of your acquaintance; but open not your caſe but to ſkilful phyſicians. To tell your experiences or the exerciſes of your mind to every one, will only tend to deceive and miſlead you. You may ſearch the Scriptures daily with ſafety, make them the man of your counſel, and they will prove a light unto your feet, and a lamp unto your paths: make them the companion of your bed-chamber and your cloſet, and you will grow in grace and in the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord: and in this way you may hope, that he who has begun a good work in you will carry it on, and perfect his own work in you.

7. If we have reaſon to believe, on ſcriptural grounds, that the Holy Ghoſt has wrought a divine and ſaving change in us, and made us happy ſubjects of his ſaving operations, we muſt not imagine that the work is done, and we have no further uſe for his ſacred agency: we may be aſſured that all our ſufficiency is of God, and that, without the conſtant ſupply of the Spirit, all our religion will ſoon dwindle into a ſpiritleſs formality, and

it

as much as we are able to do to maintain the
godlineſs, without the power. We ſhall loſe
he chriſtian temper, and that ſweet communion
Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, on which depend
e comforts of religion. They only who walk
of the Lord have the comforts of the Holy
form not reſolutions in your own ſtrength; for
nd, that, without the aids of the Holy Ghoſt,
gth will be but weakneſs: therefore ever main-
e ſenſe of your own dependence, and that you
be able to maintain the divine life without di-
nce. Be not raſh to utter vows before God,
f the Pſalmiſt modeſtly to ſay, If thou Lord
ety for me thy ſervant, I will keep thy ſta-
: cloſe with a caution:—

t not truſt ſo much to the aids or aſſiſtances of
Spirit, either before or after we have been

make a generous or honeſt mind to the greateſt exertion, diligence and activity, in working out our own ſalvation: and, if we are admitted to be workers together with God, we are aſſured that our labour ſhall ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. Nor muſt we neglect or delay our duty becauſe we think we have not the Spirit, or are not favoured with thoſe divine aids which we think are neceſſary to render our acts of obedience acceptable. We are not to wait for the moving of the Spirit, but go forth in the name of the Lord, and in the way of duty truſt in God for all thoſe gracious communications we may need: and, if we are not ſtraitened in ourſelves, we ſhall not be ſtraitened in God. Many have entered upon duty with little courage, and leſs ſtrength, who have been carried through with honour, life and joy, and found by happy experience that it is the Spirit who giveth life.

In one word—Ever maintain a ſtrict walk with God, humbly depending upon him for all thoſe ſanctifying influences and ſpecial aids of his good Spirit that we may need; and in general we ſhall find, that as our day is, ſo ſhall our ſtrength be; and in this way we ſhall renew our ſtrength, and go on from one degree of faith, love, and holy obedience, to another, till we ſhall appear complete before God, in Zion above.

DISCOURSE



Diſcourſe IV.

riety and efficacious Manner of the
rations of the HOLY SPIRIT.

1 COR. xii. 4, 5, 6.

are diverſities of gifts, but the ſame Spirit: and
differences of adminiſtrations, but the ſame Lord:
are diverſities of operations, but it is the ſame God

[redacted] Spirit of the gospel under its preaching by the ordinary ministers, and in the enjoyment of the ordinary means of grace in succeeding generations, as there was in the dispensing of those extraordinary and miraculous gifts to the apostles and primitive christians at its first promulgation:—which variety of manner, and efficacy of operation, of the Holy Ghost upon the human heart, (by which it is regenerated, or passes under that transforming moral change called in Scripture a being born again, or a being created anew in Christ Jesus) I shall endeavour to illustrate in the following pages, in as clear and concise a manner as I can.

That there is a variety of operations by the same Spirit, is evident, from the similitude our Saviour made use of when he was treating upon the subject with Nicodemus, in an evening conversation which he had with him at his private lodging, in the presence of his disciples. He plainly told him that such a change was absolutely necessary to prepare subjects for his heavenly kingdom. Jesus said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and then adds, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. And as the wind bloweth where it listeth, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell from whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, so is every one who is born of the Spirit:" which denotes both the variety and sovereignty of those divine operations—that there is a secret in the Spirit's operation, which is fully known to none but to him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working all our works in us and for us.

I cannot pretend then to descend into all the particulars which may designate a difference of operation, or a diversity of administrations, and which may be only circumstantial and local, but I shall take notice—

I. Of a diverſity of manner in which
nge has been effected.

II. The variety of means which have be

III. The difference of time when this cha
ught.—Theſe three particulars may con
t variety of operations of the Holy Ghoſt
n heart which may be neceſſary or u
wn.

. There is a variety in the manner or n
Spirit makes uſe of in producing this n
he human heart; and if, by tracing tha
thod, in which I ſhall be as clear, ſcript
imental as I can, any one may be bette
mine what their real character or true ſta
ll be very happy.

er convictions, and greater terror, may in ſome ca-
expedient. The Bleſſed Spirit ſometimes ſets the
the ſinner before his eyes in ſuch a point of light
t they appear to him as a marſhalled hoſt of ene-
ready to devour him; every circumſtance which at-
l their commiſſion wears an aſpect of terror. He
ack on the privileges he enjoyed and had abuſed,
e advantages he had been favoured with, but miſ-
ved, and he thinks that no one ever before had ſin-
ſo great a rate, and with ſuch high-handed wick-
, as he has done, and therefore that no terror is like
is terror.-- He has ſuch a ſenſe of the demerits of
mes, and the purity of the divine nature, that he
God is determined to conſign him over to everlaſt-
niſhment; and, as he thinks himſelf the greateſt
in the world, ſo his future puniſhment will exceed
o have gone before him: ſo that in the bitterneſs
ſoul he is weary of his life, and he may wiſh that
l never been born, or that he had been any other
re than what he is: or, however ſhocking the
ht of annihilation may be to beings conſcious of
eaſures of exiſtence, he is ready to wiſh he could
liately loſe his exiſtence. And the poor diſtreſſed
re may continue for days, weeks and months in
:ondition, and (as one expreſſes it) may be ſo
d with peals of thunder from mount Sinai, as to
ite deaf to the gentler ſounds from mount Zion.
we propoſe to him the terms of the goſpel, the pro-
of ſalvation to the chief of ſinners, he will not hear
l that any of theſe were made to him, or were ever
ed for him, but that hell and damnation are and
: his eternal portion, and he hears all the curſes of
broken law, and the denunciations of wrath, as
d at him, and will entertain nothing but a fearful
g for of judgment and fiery indignation, which
evour him. But in all this ſcene of terror he high-

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of the law of God which condemns him, and God as righteous, even though he should finally n over to a punishment equal to the deme- imes; which temper of mind marks his con- the effects of divine operations; and, while s entire approbation of the law as wise, holy, ood, it is evident that the Spirit of God is he way, by this severe discipline of the law, the free offers of the gospel more welcome; of the law as a schoolmaster to bring the inner to Christ, that he might be justified freely hrough faith in him. When this end is ob- clouds begin to pass off, and the broken-heart- made to hear the voice of joy and gladness, bones which had been broken are healed, and and comfort in believing.

h Chriſt for pardon and life, and have often made,
beſt manner they could, their believing application
ſt, as to the almighty and all-gracious Saviour of
yet they are afraid they have not done it in a right
, becauſe they do not feel the burden of guilt re-
nor have received any ſenſible tokens of the divine
nor any certain evidences that they are in a par-
nd ſanctified ſtate, and ſo they ſeek Jeſus ſorrow-
d weep out their ſorrows at the footſtool of the
of grace. But by degrees their ſorrows abate,
ne divine promiſe or comforting word comes in-
nind, or is impreſſed upon the memory, as that—
daughter, be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven
nd I am pacified towards thee for all which thou
ne, ſaith the Lord thy God.

/ith reſpect to others, they may have leſs ſorrow,
leſs contrition or humiliation. The mind is im-
with ſuch a tranſporting view of the wiſdom and
f the goſpel plan of ſalvation, and with the glory
liableneſs of the Saviour of men, that the enmity
t againſt God and his government, or againſt the
ng ſcheme of ſalvation by grace through faith, is
once, ſo that their hearts are melted down with
ous ſorrow for ſin, and charmed, as it were, into a
nd cordial compliance with the goſpel propoſals,
being kept long under the pangs and ſtruggles
new birth. Theſe are ſubdued by love, conquered
dneſs, without having their fears much alarmed,
hout being drove by God's fiery law to take ſanc-
the ark of the covenant of God's grace. Theſe,
as they are awakened to a ſerious conſideration
ways, turn their feet into God's ſtatutes; they
aſte, and delay not, to cloſe with the offers and
ons of the goſpel; as ſoon as they ſee themſelves
ilty and ruined ſtate, they diſcover their help in
the law of God appears ſo juſt, ſo holy and good,

the perſon and offices of Chriſt ſo amiable and complete, the propoſals of ſalvation by him ſo reaſonable and gracious, that, while they feel an utter deteſtation of all ſin, they entertain the higheſt eſteem for the laws of God and the Redeemer, and are conſtrained by the love of Chriſt, with a conſcious ſincerity, immediately to fall in with and cordially embrace the gracious offers of the goſpel; and they are filled with a joy unſpeakable and full of glory: that, inſtead of their being long encompaſſed with the ſorrows of death and the pains of hell, as others have been, their ſouls are ſoon delivered from death, their eyes from tears, and a ſong of praiſe is put into their mouths, even ſalvation to God. This ſeems to have been the caſe of Saul, who afterwards was the bleſſed apoſtle Paul, who was conquered at once by almighty grace, and cloſed with the propoſals of the goſpel as ſoon as made known to him by the preaching of Ananias. This was the caſe of the jailor, who, as ſoon as he was awakened to ſee his danger, and to inquire in earneſt what he ſhould do to be ſaved, immediately complied with the terms of ſalvation, as ſoon as they were made known to him by the preaching of the goſpel. So we read of ſome who received the word with joy in the Holy Ghoſt, on their firſt hearing it preached to them; i. e. the Holy Spirit accompanied the word which was firſt preached to them, with ſuch power, that, while it convinced them of ſin, and pointed out their danger, it wrought in them obedience to the goſpel, and inſpired them with a ſacred joy in believing.

But here I would enter a caution:—It is evident that many have been under ſome awakenings, and have ſoon been filled with joy, from a full perſuaſion that they were converted, and had experienced a ſaving change, when it was only a tranſient impreſſion made upon their paſſions and affections, which, like the morning cloud and the early dew, ſoon paſſes away. Thoſe with whom the

irit takes this laſt method need take care that they
t deceived, and take external appearance, or a ſu-
ıl impreſſion, for a real work of grace upon the
and ſo fall under the deſcription of thoſe whom
ıviour meant to repreſent by thoſe who received
ſtony ground, who heard the word with joy, but,
no root in themſelves, fell away. Where this
hich ſucceeds a few hours or days of ſorrow, is not
ed with great modeſty and humility, and a fixed
ion to walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleaſ-
here is great reaſon to fear that their ſuppoſed
is counterfeit, and that the hope built upon it
il, and be as the giving up of the ghoſt.

have to add, that with ſome the Spirit takes a
ıt method from either of the foregoing; and I
t to be more common, though more gentle,
ſs diſcernible, than any we have mentioned: and
by letting in, by gentle and more inſenſible de-
divine light into the underſtanding, ſo as to recti-
apprehenſions of God and his moral government;
s Chriſt, his natural, moral and mediatorial cha-
ſ of the nature, reality and importance of a future
ı eternal world; and from that to awaken the at-
ı, to warm the affections, and to fix the reſolution,
ıt making any of thoſe painful or tranſporting im-
ns upon the mind as in any of the forementioned
ds. It is certain, that though God is ſometimes
earthquake, and ſometimes in the fire, and in the
ş wind, yet perhaps he is oftener in the gentle, ſtill
voice, agreeably to the repreſentation of the Pro-

A late learned, pious and ſpiritual writer ob-
upon this ſubject, that the operations of the Holy
upon the human heart are often, and he thinks
ommonly, of ſuch a nature as makes it difficult, if
e, to diſtinguiſh them from the natural and rational
es of our intellectual powers; becauſe the temper
and

and ſentiments with which the Spirit of God inſpires them who are under his enlightening and ſanctifying influences are rational, and perfectly agreeable to what reaſon in her proper and moſt perfect exerciſe would dictate.

Perſons with whom the Spirit takes this laſt and moſt gentle method are generally begun with while young. They are awakened, and convinced of ſin as an evil and bitter thing; their convictions ſubſide, & then return upon them with more force, and then wear off again. Sometimes they are full of concern about their ſouls, and form new and more fixed reſolutions, and begin to entertain a comfortable hope; they think they can diſcover ſome lineaments of a work of grace upon their hearts; they think they feel the love of God and goodneſs; they think they feel a growing averſion to ſin and moral guilt, and ſo much of the conſtraining influence of the love of Chriſt, that they can truſt in his merits, and can, and do, really lodge their eternal intereſt in his hands. They take more delight in ordinances, and feel a benevolence of heart which extends to the whole family of mankind, eſpecially to the whole houſehold of faith; they anon grow more remiſs and careleſs, and become ſo indifferent about the moſt intereſting concerns, that they are ready to give up all hopes that they have experienced any thing like a ſaving change of heart. This awakens their concern anew, and calls up their attention, and they apply themſelves with new rigour to the exerciſes of devotion, or under afflictions they feel their hearts tenderly touched, or, experiencing ſome very eminent and ſignal deliverance from impending danger, they feel their hearts melt into gratitude and thankfulneſs: theſe ſenſations revive their hopes, and they are comfortable again, but not in tranſports. Perſons of this deſcription, though their peace is often interrupted, and they have many doubts and perplexing fears, becauſe, it may be, they cannot give a particular account of their converſion,

erſion, or ſay at what time they experienced any ma-
l or moral change in their temper or diſpoſition, or
nſe they have never had ſuch terror or ſuch joy as
rs have had—at length commonly arrive, under the
nſations of providence and grace, to as great a ſtea-
ſs in religion, and to a temper as habitually gracious,
ay; and, from an impartial view of their whole
luct, there appear in them as evident marks of the
chriſtian as in thoſe whoſe paſſions have been more
igly touched, and whoſe temper and conduct have
ſuddenly and more viſibly changed; and they them-
s may feel as great a conſciouſneſs of their undiſſem-
love to God, as cordial a truſt in the Lord Jeſus
iſt, and and as univerſal a benevolence to mankind,
ny who have been regenerated with all the moſt
ful agitations of mind. If ſo, it is well; they may
ſſured that, in the Scripture ſtyle, they have been
of the Spirit, though his operation upon their hearts
have been like the gentleſt breeze, which can hardly
perceived from what quarter it comes, or to what
it it tends; for, as the wind bloweth when and where
ſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt
tell from whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, ſo
with ſome, if not with every one, who is born of the
it.

I. We proceed to conſider the diverſity of the opera-
s of the ſame Spirit, with reſpect to the *Means* which
made uſe of to effect this ſaving change in the human
rt. And here indeed there is a great variety; but
more common and ordinary means are, divine ordi-
ces, providences, and the more immediate impreſſions
de upon the mind by the concurrence of a great va-
y of means, without making any particular uſe of one
re than another.

i. By divine ordinances I mean, principally, prayer,
ding of the word of God, and the hearing of it preach-
ed.

Theſe have been the common, and in th
pirit are very powerful, means which ar
effecting this moral and ſaving change,
of my readers can teſtify from their own
have found the word of God powerful,
a two-edged ſword: many have found
el to be the power of God to ſalvation, be
d with the energy of the Holy Spirit, a
en thouſands can teſtify.

t we need not reſt the evidence merely
ony: for the Scriptures abound with evi
, which cannot be diſputed. The roy
long ago ſay, in honour of the written
f the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul
s of the Lord are ſure, making wiſe t
atutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing

made to his Heavenly Father a little before he ſuffered, Holy Father, ſanctify them through the truth; thy word is truth: which prayer clothed the written word with a ſanctifying influence, through the operations of the Holy Spirit. And the preaching of the word has, through the operation of the Spirit, been a powerful means of convincing and converting ſinners to God, and of building up the ſaints in faith and holineſs. The apoſtle James obſerves, that the Spirit by his own will begat them by the word of truth. Lydia's heart was opened while Paul preached to her the goſpel at her own houſe; and vaſt multitudes were brought under ſerious concern by the preaching of Peter, and were led to inquire, with a ſolicitude becoming the importance of the queſtion, Men and brethren, what ſhall we do? But the word preached does not always profit, not being mixed with faith in them who hear it; which gives occaſion often to repeat the complaint of the Apoſtle—Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? or more poſitively—We have laboured in vain, and ſpent our ſtrength for nought and in vain. Yet God has not left his word altogether without witneſs, but even to this day has made the plain and artleſs preaching of the word the power of God unto ſalvation. O that it was more evidently ſo among us at the preſent day! The operation of the Spirit of God upon the human heart is not confined to the beſt-adapted means, but he makes uſe of what he pleaſes, and how and when he pleaſes: particularly we have to remark—

2. *Providences*, both merciful and afflictive; theſe, as means in the hands of the Spirit, work ſometimes very powerfully upon the hearts of ſinners. As, for inſtance, mercies; ſome great and ſignal favours, or ſurpriſing deliverances from great and impending dangers, have melted down the hardeſt heart, and begotten ſincere and genuine repentance for paſt ſins and baſe ingratitude,

and

due the paſſions, of hardened ſinn
the body has, under the direction
buted to the reſtoration of the ſoul
when thrown upon a bed of ſickn
rendered incapable of the emplo
ments of life, when there is no taſ
ſures or amuſements of the ſenſes,
heart to wiſdom, and his ear to hea
ſiders of his ways, and returns unto
haſte, and delays not to keep his
goſpel.

I know, too often, impreſſio
mind by affliction paſs off like
being made only on the paſſions
all religious appearances vaniſh :
burden is removed: but this has
caſe; there have been laſting and
the chaſtiſements of the rod; ſtupi
have been made wiſe to ſalvation.
Manaſſeh, that arch ſinner: when h
thorns, and laid in fetters, then he l

e in the heart of a before inattentive and careleſs
I cannot adduce inſtances of this, where there is
at a variety, therefore I ſhall leave it to thoſe who
ecollect the ſeemingly inconſiderable incidents which
wrought powerfully in them, and brought them,
i careleſs, inattentive, diſſipated ſtate, to a rational,
erate life of chriſtian morality. It will be granted,
oſe, that where Paul has planted, and Apollos wa-
without effect, or where the moſt rational and pow-
preaching of the goſpel has been attended upon in
i word fitly ſpoken has entered into the inmoſt ſoul,
lainly ſhewn, that, though it was an arrow from
drawn at a venture, yet it was from God's quiver,
irected by the Omniſcient Spirit to the ſeat of prin-
in the human heart. Or, it may be, only the ſick-
r the death of a near relation, or a dear friend, or
ſions of the night, may awaken a lethargic ſoul,
may end in the fixed habits of piety.

I have to add—Sometimes, though I believe it is
he Bleſſed Spirit ſeems to work without, or with the
rrence of a great variety, of means, without making
rticular uſe of one more than another. If human
ny can be credited, ſometimes a text of Scripture,
it being lately read or heard, has been ſo impreſſed
he mind as to become like a nail faſtened in a ſure
and has engroſſed all the thoughts, and called forth
powers of the mind to attend to what it dictated,
riven ſinners from their revels to their knees and to
Saviour. Others, who had been the moſt aban-
ſinners, or the tameſt ſlaves of vice, and who had
e ſalutary influence of a religious education, and
ngrown ſhame itſelf, have on a ſudden been ſnatch-
brands out of the burning, and, by one means or
, or by the concurrence of a great variety of
, without being able to ſay what had the greateſt
with them, have been brought to themſelves, and

they have returned, with the prodigal, penitently confeſſing, "Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee." Perhaps an affecting ſenſe of a preſent, omniſcient Deity, who has been witneſs to all their crimes, may contribute as much as any thing to the loathing of themſelves, and their repenting in duſt and aſhes before him. Sometimes I have obſerved, that a deep and affecting ſenſe of the love of the dear Redeemer (without the ſubjects being able to ſay what firſt excited that affecting ſenſe of the conſtraining love of Chriſt in them) has melted down the ſtone into a fountain of penitential tears, and inſcribed the divine image on the pliant heart, and inſpired them with ſuch an invincible reſolution, that they have ſhone, through the remainder of life, the ſons of God, without rebuke, exhibiting a bright aſſemblage of heroic chriſtian virtues, and been the ornaments both of ſociety and religion. But theſe inſtances are very rare, as it is fit they ſhould be, leſt ſome by them ſhould be encouraged to neglect the more common, ordinary and ſtated means of grace: but that there have been ſome ſuch inſtances, in and ever ſince the days of the apoſtles, cannot be denied. And it is evident that ſuch caſes have their uſe, as they ſerve to prove that the Bleſſed Spirit is the author and the agent, and acts as a ſovereign in producing this moral change in the human heart.

I have in the laſt place to obſerve, that there is a diverſity of operations by the ſame Spirit, with reſpect to the *Time* when this neceſſary change is effected. But, in purſuing this part of my ſubject, I ſhall confine my thoughts, and direct yours, to the three common ſtages of life—infancy, childhood, and mature age of manhood.

1. It muſt be granted, that ſometimes this change is wrought in infancy or childhood, or before the ſubject is properly a moral agent, or capable of thinking or acting

for

for himſelf. It is certain that there have been ſome very remarkable inſtances of early piety. And ſome children, from what they have ſaid about God and Chriſt, about their duty and another world, have evidently ſhewn, that the Holy Spirit has had acceſs to their young hearts, and, as tender twigs, bent them God-ward and heaven-ward. And here I can ſay, as ſome of you who are parents can, I have ſpecial reaſon to believe, that there have been ſome beſides Samuel, Obadiah, Joſiah, Jeremiah, and young Timothy, who have been made the ſubjects of ſanctifying grace before their underſtandings arrived to ſuch a ſtate of maturity as to feel the force of an argument, or to digeſt a ſyſtem of religion.

Here I will give you the opinion of two very learned and pious divines; I mean Mr. Baxter and Dr. Doddridge. Mr. Baxter ſaid, he verily believed, that if parents would do their duty, preaching would not be the more common and ordinary means of converting ſouls, but that the greater part would be wrought upon by a religious education in the hands of the Spirit, before they were capable of entering into the reaſoning of a ſermon: and Dr. Doddridge ſays, ſome are wrought upon in their infancy, and he believes moſt would be, were parents to do their duty; and adds, that he had obſerved, that God did commonly bleſs the endeavours of pious mothers for this divine purpoſe. If none of us have experienced the ſalutary effect of early and religious inſtructions from a pious mother, yet young Timothy had abundant reaſon to be thankful for the religious education which he had received from his pious mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois, who from his youth had taught him to know the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wiſe unto ſalvation.

2. But the more uſual time when this change is wrought in the heart is in youth, before the habits of ſin become

become ſtrong, and before the cares and pleaſures of the world fall with their full weight upon the heart. This may be ſuppoſed from the reaſon of things, and proved from Scripture and experience. Though it is to be lamented that many youth, either through a careleſs inattention, or a criminal neglect, of a parents inſtruction, or through the want of a religious education, or prudent diſcipline, or through the vanity of their own minds, or the attractive charms of the world, or the infatuating influence of ſenſual pleaſures, follow after vanity till they become vain, and forget the God who made them, and diſeſteem the Rock who begat them, and, like the horſe who deſies the rein, keep up a full career, until they are irrecoverably gone in the paths of the deſtroyer: thanks be to God, this is not always the caſe; many, and I believe by far the greater part, of thoſe who are regenerate, are, by one means or another, brought to conſecrate themſelves to God while warm with all the vigour of youth, before the evil days are come, or the years draw nigh wherein they have no pleaſure. And, having given up themſelves to God in an everlaſting covenant, they join in full communion with the people of God, and appear as olive plants round about the ſacred table; and ſo the church, according to the prediction, ſees her ſeed, her [illegible] one ſaying, I am the Lord's, another calling himſelf by the name of the Lord Jeſus, and another ſubſcribing unto the name of the Lord, and with his own hand firnaming him by the name of the God of Iſrael.

But the leaſt likely time of all is in the decline of life. Very few inſtances, I believe, can be produced of perſons who have much paſſed the meridian, or mature manhood, under the power of ſin, eſtranged to God and godlineſs, who have ever met with any thing which looked like a divine change wrought in them. They generally wax *worſe* and worſe, and live and die monuments of divine wrath.

wrath. Nor need we wonder at it, when we conſider the inveterate ſtrength of ſinful habits, and the invincible force of contracted prejudices, the weakneſs of the human mind, the fickleneſs of aged childhood, and the amazing treaſures of guilt which ſuch muſt have contracted who have long deſpiſed and abuſed the goſpel of the grace of God. To make any impreſſions on ſuch dry bones—on ſuch hard hearts—muſt be next to a natural impoſſibility; for can the Ethiopian change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots? then they who have been accuſtomed to do evil may learn to do well. But, to the honour of divine grace, as an evidence of the almighty energy of the Holy Spirit, and as a demonſtration of the ſovereignty of his operations, ſome have been born again when they have been old. Sometimes the rock has been ſmitten, and the waters of genuine repentance have flowed out; ſometimes there has been a ſhaking among the dry bones; and, how ſtrange ſoever it may ſeem, even dry bones may live, and ſtand up both for the defence and for an ornament to religion.

Improvement.

1. From what you have heard or read, you may learn; that you muſt not neglect any of thoſe means which God has appointed, or has made uſe of, and which you have in your hands; as you know not which he will bleſs, and render effectual to your ſalvation, or which the Holy Spirit may make uſe of to accompliſh his own work in you. He is ſovereign in his operations, and various in his adminiſtrations; and he makes what uſe he pleaſes of means: and ſometimes he apparently works without the uſe of means, or by the concurrence of a great variety of means, without making any diſtinguiſhing uſe of one more than another: therefore you muſt not neglect ſome which you may think the leaſt likely, and attend upon others which you may think more likely, to effect this ſaving change in the heart; but humbly, ſteadily and conſcien-

the rash Naaman refuse the waters bid by the Prophet to make use of for from his leprosy, because he thought Damascus were as likely to effect a c dan. If he had obstinately continu would have returned with the leprosy being persuaded by his wiser servants the Prophet's direction bathed himself and was made clean. So you must n but in obedience to divine direction means you have, and look up to the Gracious Agent to render them effec tion and final salvation.

2. You must not make your ow dard for others, nor the experience o for your own; for there is a diversity same Spirit, who worketh all in all manner as he may think proper. S and desponding mind are much couraged, and are ready to call in q or the reality of any change wrought i



their time when the work was wrought in them; for all their fellow christians will assure them, that the [illegible] is so evident that they cannot be insensible of the [illegible] them it is wrought, that they can have no certain [illegible] of a real change of heart, if they cannot assign the [illegible] then it took place, though they exhibit much of a [illegible] temper, and externally appear the children of God, [illegible] rebuke. As will also they deny that the wind [illegible] though they may hear the sound thereof, and feel [illegible] chilling breeze, because they cannot tell from whence [illegible] eth, nor whither it goeth.

[illegible] us all be cautious that we do not censure those who [illegible] evidently the marks of God's children upon them, [illegible] they cannot ascertain the particular time when, [illegible] manner how, they became regenerate in the tem- [illegible] their mind: and let the humble and doubtful soul [illegible] couraged, though the change in his temper has not [illegible] sensible as it has been in some others. Yet, if [illegible] feel your heart God-ward, and his love reigning [illegible] If you feel a cordial love towards the Lord [illegible] Christ, and have by faith lodged the salvation of [illegible] all in his hand; if you feel an approbation of, and [illegible] it is, the law of God, after the inner man; if you [illegible] do, take delight in the word, worship and or- [illegible] es of God, and feel an unfeigned and prevailing [illegible] the whole family of mankind, a growing hatred [illegible] and an aspiring after greater degrees of holiness; [illegible] may at least maintain a very comfortable hope that [illegible] born of the Spirit, though you may not be able [illegible] when or how.

You should attend your duty conscientiously, [illegible] diligently desire the co-operations of the Blessed Spirit [illegible] those means which you do enjoy, be they in your [illegible] ion small or great, likely or unlikely, remember [illegible] God has promised his Holy Spirit to them who [illegible] ask.

most interesting [illegible]
has contributed most in touching the h
those serious reflections—thank God,
and be sure to cultivate those serio
meditation, prayer, and converse with
most approved christians of your acqu
cially with your minister: open you
him, and desire him to deal plainly
you, that you may be found in the fa
of God.

Guard against every thing which
dency to break the bruised reed,
smoking flax—all unnecessary worldly c
useless and dangerous amusements—
on the devotions of the family, the cl
of God, and revere the dictates of co
ligious, not with a superstitious eye;
dence of God, and which way the
By these exercises and reflections you
duty, and acquire a stronger habit
may be allowed the expression, you

nature grow into ſtrong and fixed habits of vice. We muſt begin to inſtruct them very early in the knowledge of God, their Heavenly Father, and of Jeſus Chriſt, whom right to know is life eternal. We muſt try to give them, early, ſome right apprehenſions of their Redeemer—how much he loved our ſinful race, and what kind notice he took of little children, and that he ſaid, Of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven. And we muſt endeavour to raiſe in them ſome growing deſires to know the will of God, and how they ſhall pleaſe him—ſhew them, by ſome ſtriking inſtances, what is like to be the end of a life of ſin and folly, and what will be the happy portion of them who love, fear and ſerve God from their childhood. Young Timothy knew the holy Scriptures from his youth, which made him a good man, and wiſe to ſalvation.

5. We muſt let youth know, in general, that now is the beſt time to become virtuous; for now is the accepted time, and now is the day of ſalvation—the moſt likely time in which they may be renewed, and intereſted in the bleſſings of the goſpel. If they ſhould let this favourable opportunity ſlip unimproved, and continue on in the ways of ſin and folly, under the power of native corruptions, beyond the moſt likely [illegible] there is little probability that they will become [illegible] in the decline of life.

Therefore, my dear youth, for whom principally I have in the laſt ſtage of life penned theſe pages, and ſent them abroad, ſuffer me to call upon you to ſeek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. The days are haſtening on when you may call and not be heard, but your feet may ſtumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, God may cauſe darkneſs, and turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs.

ade—Let all thoſe who have already got in-
e of life, and are ſhrouded with the evening
give all diligence to make their calling and
. My brethren, the time is far ſpent; the
hand. It is high time for us to ſearch and
we are not yet in the gall of bitterneſs and
quity. And, though we ſhould find, upon
examination, the too evident marks of un-
upon us, yet we muſt not utterly deſpair: the
it is ſovereign and various in his operations.
athe upon dry bones, and cauſe them to live,
the ornaments of human nature, and advo-
gion. He has done it for ſome, and may do
He may do it for us. But verily the caſe
but not deſperate. We muſt immediately lay
weight, and the ſin which eaſily beſets us,
unneceſſary cares, and apply to the one thing

Diſcourſe V.

On the Evidence of the Chriſtian Revelation.

1 THESS. v. 21.

Prove all things; hold faſt that which is good.

OUR Apoſtle cloſes this his firſt epiſtle to the Theſſalonians with a charming mixture of piety, zeal and tenderneſs, and pours out the fulneſs of his heart in a truly laconic ſtyle, and crowds into a few ſhort verſes almoſt the whole circle of chriſtian duty, enforced by weighty arguments, and the moſt benevolent wiſh, that the very God of Peace would ſanctify them wholly. He is far from aſſuming the air of an infallible dictator; for, with all the plenitude of inſpiration, he ſubjected all that he had ſaid to their free, impartial and candid examination, that they ſhould try and prove all things, and hold faſt that which was good; which would be acting worthy the dignity of reaſonable beings, and free moral agents, who muſt give an account of themſelves to God: and what upon a fair and full examination they found to be good—truths and facts with which their higheſt honour and intereſt were connected—he exhorts them to hold faſt, to adhere cloſely to them, found their faith upon them, and regulate their practice by them.

It is as evident that man was made for religion, as that he was made for ſociety. It ſeems to be a dictate of nature.

by a word which in our language
And certainly that ſyſtem of religio
two objects, the glory of God, and t
in one capital point, ſtands the faire
from God, of any which has been a
And ſuch (for the preſent we ſhall
the Chriſtian Religion. But, as G
of us an implicit faith, nor blind ol
and requires us, as in our text, to p
hold faſt that which is good; we ſh
as impartially as we can into the trut
the chriſtian religion; and, if we fin
tion good, both true and divine, we
here to it as the one thing needful.

And, that we may not be loſt in th
with which we are encompaſſed, w
obſerve the following method:

It is natural for mankind to exp
period, a revelation from God, wh
with a ſyſtem of religion.

The chriſtian revelation is from G



delightful taſk. And the inquiry, if properly made, muſt be attended with the happieſt conſequences. The more we examine into the truth, the reaſonableneſs and the fitneſs of the chriſtian religion, the more evidently it will appear to be from God—that good thing which muſt be cloſely adhered to. And though we hope there are but few in theſe United States, of the preſent generation, who call in queſtion the truth, the reaſonableneſs and authenticity of our holy religion, yet, from the present appearance, and the rapid progreſs the principles of infidelity are making in Europe, we have reaſon to fear, that another century will produce many *here* who will deny the Lord who bought them, and will contemn and treat his religion as only a cunningly deviſed fable, whom our children may be called to reſiſt ſteadfaſtly in the faith. And what we have to ſay on this ſubject reſpects the future as well as the preſent generation: and our prayer to God is, that the ſteadfaſtneſs of the preſent and the riſing generations in the chriſtian faith and practice may prove all which can be ſaid on the ſubject to be ſuperfluous.

What we ſhall firſt attempt to prove is, that, conſidering our dependent ſtate, we had reaſon to expect a revelation from God, ſufficient to found our faith upon, and to direct our practice. For it is evident that man in a ſtate of innocence needed ſuch a revelation. Such was his connexion and dependence, that he could not be his own infallible guide in all matters which reſpected his duty, his ſafety and happineſs. If his reaſon was ſufficiently clear to guide him in the matter of his duty, ſo far as it conſiſted in the internal and external practice of moral virtue, yet his reaſon and common ſenſe could not guide him in matters merely poſitive, which depended entirely on the will of the Inſtitutor, and which could not be known but by revelation from him: and ſome poſitive inſtitutions are neceſſary to complete every ſyſtem of religion.

How many of thoſe poſitive inſtitutions
been neceſſary to complete a ſyſtem of relig
to a ſtate of innocency, we know not: one cer
was (according to Moſes) that which pro
fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and
evident, too, that man in a ſtate of innocenc
revelation from his Creator in matters whic
the preſervation of his health, and the ſecuri
moting of his ſafety and happineſs in this w
evident that his reaſon, however clear and ſt
not infallibly guide him in the choice of his f
what would afford him the beſt nutriment fo
In a world of ſenſe, where there was ſuch a
ſome of which was good and nutritious, oth
proper and pernicious, he muſt have ſome b
than human reaſon in her beſt eſtate, to paſs
through a ſhort life of ſenſe. Though man w

known thoſe purpoſes of grace; and this muſt be
elation. Therefore a divine revelation is highly
ble in itſelf; and, conſidering the dependent ſtate
n, and his preſent lapſed ſtate, we have the higheſt
to expect one; as it is impoſſible for us, or any
nder all the advantages and improvements in na-
or human knowledge, to ſay on what terms an of-
l God will receive and ſave his guilty creature
without a revelation.

d this probability grows ſtronger, when we conſi-
w infinitely eaſy it is with God, and how perfectly
ble to his ſpiritual nature, to reveal his mind and
his intelligent creatures: for, as he muſt perfectly
both the capacities and wants of his creatures, ſo
ſt have eaſy and immediate acceſs to the conſcious
either by immediate impulſe, or by the influences
Spirit, or by the adminiſtrations of angels, or by
ver way elſe he is pleaſed to make his will known.
hat he would do this, may be argued from his own
olence, and his moſt gracious nature, which diſpoſe
o ſhew favour where he can conſiſtently with his
perfections; and alſo from the ample and abundant
ions which he has made for our bodies ever ſince
nſe took place: for he giveth unto us all things, ne-
y for our comfortable ſupport, richly to enjoy: and
y a natural and neceſſary conſequence, leads us to
ude that he would not leave us deſtitute of thoſe
ions neceſſary for the ſoul. He has not only added
eſſing to the earth, which drinketh in the rain which
h oft upon it, ſo that it bringeth forth for them by
it is dreſſed; but he has provided means to heal
diſordered and ſickly bodies which became mortal
e original lapſe: ſo that we have phyſic as well as
: and he extends his care to all the works of his
. May we not then conclude, with certainty, that
uld provide for the wants and maladies of the im-
mortal

mortal ſoul, and furniſh us with the means of ſpiritua health, and immortal vigour? We may ſafely argu from the leſs to the greater *here*. If he has taken ſuc care of the body, he will take care of the mind, the no bler and better part of our natures. He has taught us t take more care of the ſoul than of the body, and to la bour principally for that meat which endureth unto eter nal life: and we are taught to argue upon the ſame prin ciples, that, becauſe God takes care of oxen and ſparrows, we muſt not diſtruſt his providence; for we are of more value, and ſtand higher in his eſteem, than brutes and fowls. So we think we may fairly argue, that, becauſe God takes care of the body, he will take care of the ſoul, and make ſuch a clear, full and ample revelation of his mind and will, as will found our faith, and regulate our practice.

Another argument of the probability of ſuch a revela tion may be drawn from the univerſal deſire of one. The deſire ſeems to be *innate*, and that we ſhall have one ſeems to be the dictate of nature; and we cannot ſuppoſe that the great Former of the human mind would impreſs upon it deſires which he never did deſign to ſatisfy: we therefore ſee all mankind looking out for revelations. The moſt barbarous have their gods, their oracles, and their reſponſes from which they think they have the will of the gods made known to them, and which they profeſs to follow as the rule of life. This deſire being ſo univer ſal, we may rationally ſuppoſe that it was impreſſed upon the human heart in its firſt formation, which not being eraſed by the original lapſe, it remains there an argument that God deſigned to bleſs the world, fallen into ſin and darkneſs, with a clear, full and ſufficient revelation of his mind to man, which, if properly attended to, would teach him the way to life perfectly. And this deſire, being ardent and univerſal, is happily adapted to prepare the mind to receive and attend to ſuch a revelation when made.

made. From all which it plainly appears, that there is the utmoſt reaſon to expect, and that we may conclude with the greateſt moral certainty, that, at ſome time or other, God would reveal himſelf, with his mind and will, to man, in ſuch a clear and full manner as would form a ſyſtem of religion exactly adapted to the preſent fallen ſtate of man—a revelation which would afford ſufficient light in every eſſential branch of duty. And ſuch a revelation as this we think we have in our Bibles, eſpecially in the New Teſtament, which we ſhall attempt to prove is from God—*a divine revelation.*

The arguments in ſupport of the divinity of the chriſtian revelation are very copious; but we ſhall be as plain and conciſe as we can and do juſtice to our ſubject.

1. We ſhall endeavour to prove the genuineneſs and authenticity of the writings of the New Teſtament.

And we think we may with the utmoſt ſafety lay it down as a matter of fact, that there was a ſet of men in the world who were called chriſtians, near eighteen hundred years ago: of this we are as certain as we are of any tranſaction or event which took place before our day, or the preſent age; for the higheſt evidence we can have of any fact ſaid to be done in any paſt age is, the united record of thoſe perſons who lived in that day, and were eye and ear witneſſes, and fully capable of relating and judging of the facts ſaid to be done. And we have not only the united hiſtorical records of the chriſtians themſelves of the truth of facts, with an account of the treatment they met with from an unbelieving and an ungrateful world, with its conſequences; but we have the united hiſtorical records of the ſame things from the enemies of chriſtianity, who give a particular and circumſtantial account of the chriſtian doctrines, and how they proceeded againſt them as heretics: which writings, coming from the enemies of the chriſtians, prove as certainly that there

evidence which the nature of the t
cannot reaſonably aſk for more. V
it follows, that there was ſuch a pe
who lived and died before any of his
chriſtians, and from whom they rece
if there had not been a perſon wh
there would have been no foundatio
ſect of men at that day chriſtians.
ſuch a perſon as Jeſus Chriſt, who
died under the reign of Tiberius C
hundred years ago, we have the joint
and enemies: and, though they d
they give of him, yet they all exactly
that he was born at Bethlehem—bro
—that he founded the chriſtian rel
was crucified at Jeruſalem as a ſtate
we have all the evidences that it is po
have, that there was ſuch a perſon as
was born at the time, in the place
writings of the New Teſtament ſay t
preached doctrines, and wrought mira
of them; and, in ſhort, that he died

are led from hence to aſſert, that there were books
ı at that time by the profeſſed friends and follow-
Chriſt, which contain the memoirs of his life, doc-
ınd death, the moſt authentic of which were written
r of his profeſſed followers, and were known by
mes Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. And this
s, not only from the writings of the chriſtian fa-
ı the firſt century—who have all borne their teſti-
:o the truth and genuineneſs of thoſe books called
ır evangeliſts, and written by thoſe four men, as
s from their writings which are yet extant—but
:e the united teſtimony of the enemies and perſe-
of the chriſtians, to the genuineneſs of theſe writ-
They warmly diſputed with the chriſtian fathers
:hem, but never denied their exiſtence or genuine-
and theſe diſputes about the four evangeliſts, be-
:he friends and enemies of Chriſt, remain unto this
living demonſtration, which cannot be withſtood,
ere were perſons of ſuch names, who wrote thoſe
:alled the four evangeliſts, and that they are au-
and genuine—no ſpurious or cunningly deviſed
of a later date. The principal of thoſe writers
the four evangeliſts were Celſus, Porphyry, Hie-
ınd Julian, who were anſwered by Origen, Metho-
ıſebius, Gregory Nazianzen, and Cyril; in which
nd warm diſputes the genuineneſs or authenticity
e books was never called in queſtion, but the things
ıed in them were diſputed: nor do we remember
is part of the New Teſtament, as to its genuineneſs
er diſputed by any in the two firſt centuries. And
y add, that, as counterfeits imply and always prove
ſtence of true coin, ſo the ſpurious goſpels which
ırds made their appearance, and which were ſoon
d and rejected by the chriſtian church, prove be-
diſpute the truth and genuineneſs of thoſe which
ſtood the teſt of many centuries, and remain, the
living

living oracles of God, or the record which God has given of his Son, the true prophet who came from God. And the ſame may be ſaid of all the other writings which compoſe the New Teſtament. Chriſtianity had her enemies from the beginning, as might be expected. They were oppoſed to the doctrines and ſentiments contained in the epiſtles of Paul, Peter, James and John; but in their diſputes with the chriſtian fathers they allowed them to have an equal claim to truth and authenticity with the writings of the four evangeliſts. And Euſebius, a very early and impartial writer, ſays expreſsly, that the Four Evangeliſts, the Acts of the Apoſtles, and all the epiſtles which now compoſe the New Teſtament, were univerſally received by the chriſtian church as inſpired writings, and regarded as ſuch. But, as there are no writings in the world of equally intereſting importance, if true, as thoſe of the New Teſtament, ſo there is no hiſtory or ſyſtem of religion which has met with ſuch violent oppoſition, nor the authors with ſuch cruel perſecution, for avowing and ſupporting them; and yet there are no hiſtories or writings which carry ſuch evidence of truth, and marks of their genuineneſs and authenticity: for, beſides the having all the evidence which is thought ſufficient to prove the truth and genuineneſs of any hiſtory, theſe have the addition of the united teſtimony of all the enemies of chriſtianity in their favour, though they did not mean ſo, nor their hearts think ſo; which teſtimony reflects a light in favour of this ſacred writing, ſtrong and clear in proportion to the numbers and violence by which their authors and writings were perſecuted and oppoſed.

Having proved, beyond all reaſonable diſpute, that there were books written by the four evangeliſts and the apoſtles, the friends and immediate followers of Jeſus Chriſt, containing the memoirs of his life, doctrines and death, and that theſe writings complete the ſyſtem of his *religion*, called Chriſtianity; we paſs directly to prove,

that

heſe very writings which compoſe the New Teſta-
have been preſerved and handed down to us uncor-
l, aud are the very ſame, without any material or
al alteration, which were originally written by the
our evangeliſts and apoſtles.

id we will venture to ſay, that it is abſolutely cer-
hat the writings of the New Teſtament, as we now
hem, are the ſame with thoſe ancient records which
under the ſame name, and that they have been
nitted down to us without any material or eſſential
tion: for it is abſolutely impoſſible, in the nature
eaſon of things, that any corruption or material al-
on ſhould take place in them, without being very
liſcovered; for we all know that theſe books were
n by different hands, and for the benefit of man-
and contain matters, if true, of the laſt importance
e whole human race. They were therefore ſoon
l abroad into diſtant parts, and tranſlated into dif-
: languages, for the inſtruction of thoſe who did not
ſtand the language in which they were originally
n; and they were put into the hands of chriſtians of
ent ſentiments about the non-eſſential matters in reli-
; ſo that it is certain, if any one perſon, or party, or
n, had or ſhould corrupt or alter any eſſential doc-
or article, ſuch corurption or alteration would very
be diſcovered by another perſon, party or nation;
his diſcovery would furniſh the enemies of chriſtia-
with a good reaſon to object againſt the whole; and
would not have failed to make uſe of ſuch an argu-
to object againſt the genuineneſs of the ſacred writ-
: which objection has never been made, becauſe they
never had any thing on which they could ground it.

it will any one ſay, that it may be all were agreed
, and when, and where, to alter? This is impoſſible;
o ſuppoſe that all the many millions who have re-
ceived

same place and manner, is the grea
be conceived, and, all things confid
bility. But, on the other hand, th
ſuffer ſome ſmall alterations, in ma
is almoſt abſolutely certain; for, as
ſo many tranſlations into different
too which would not bear a literal
ſome of which were ſo barbarous as
which the diſtinguiſhing doctrines o
expreſſed, which defect the tranſlato
ply with words of the original lang
uſe of metaphors taken from well-l
among the nation for whom the tra
to convey the idea where words we
it; conſidering alſo that theſe w
through ſo many different preſſes, a
chriſtians of different denominatic
conſidering all theſe things, it is a
that they ſhould ſuffer ſome alter
non-eſſential articles, which they hav
as might be ſhewn in a variety of in
defects, and different readings, the e

the pleaſure to add, that the tranſlation into the ſh language, as we now have it in our hands, is a tranſlation, and agreeable with the original in all ial and eſſential points, as moſt who are regularly luced into the goſpel miniſtry can teſtify. And I cannot but obſerve, that it would not be ſafe in ary caſes to commit the goſpel miniſtry to perſons are not able to read the Bible in the original, eſpe- the New Teſtament, or who are not able from their perſonal knowledge to ſay whether our tranſlation eeable to the original, or not. But, if we who n the miniſtry were not able to do this, and the ators were diſpoſed to impoſe upon the ignorant and med by a wrong tranſlation, yet it would be very ult, if poſſible, for us or them to do it without being diately detected, and expoſed to popular reſent- : for, ſo long as there are learned men in the , and a diverſity of opinions among them, if any or ſet of men were perfidious enough to make any ial alteration in our tranſlation, thoſe who were different way of thinking would immediately diſ- the fraud, and expoſe ſuch interpreters to ſhame, raw upon them public odium. There always have diſſenſions in the church about leſs eſſential matters, ome about the weightier things of the law and the l too, and each ſect or party have always been very of having the Scriptures on their ſide, to ſupport opinions in which they differed from their brethren; at if any one party or ſect ſhould have gone about rupt or materially to alter our tanſlation from the ial, to make it ſpeak more in favour of their own cular opinions, ſuch miſtranſlation or corruption d have been immediately diſcovered by thoſe whom ppoſed, by appealing to the original; who, if from her principle than that of party-zeal, would not have p ſo fair an opportunity to expoſe the fraudulent deed

to

verſity of ſentiments among pro
demonſtration—That there was a
hundred years ago, who were calle
was before that time a perſon wh
hem, in the land of Judea, that
Nazareth, who was called Jeſu
publickly ex[illegible] and w
[illegible] of them
were his friends and followers, w
life, doctrines and death, who g
hiſtorical account of his miracle
prodigies which attended h[illegible]
called Matthew, Mark, Luke an
there were others who were his co
his diſciples or apoſtles. Theſe
plete ſyſtem of his religion, in ſeve
particular chriſtian churches, to p
influence; and others of a more c
Theſe writings of the four eva
tles compoſe our New Teſtament,
ed, have been preſerved pure, an
without any corruption or mate
we have theſe uncorrupted writin
own language in ſo faithful a ma

and Maſter, by divine appointment, called chriſ-
They, with us, eſteemed theſe writings the true
s of God; and as they did, ſo do we, ſet to our
at theſe ſacred writings are the living oracles of
d of truth, if theſe inſpired authors were the true
s of God. If there is any fraud or deception in
ritings, it muſt be in the original authors them-
; for we have proved to demonſtration that a cor-
t could not take place in any period of later date.
at theſe authors were honeſt men, fully capable of
y of the facts on which they grounded their teſti-
and incapable of wicked artifice and deception,
nk will abundantly appear by a general and im-
ſurvey of their character and ſituation. And it
in that they were fully capable of judging as to
s on which they grounded the truth of their teſti-
as, for inſtance, they were capable of judging
r there was ſuch a perſon as Jeſus Chriſt, who
onverſant among them—whether he wrought
s before them—whether he fell into the hands of
mies, and was crucified by them—whether he aroſe
ie dead, and did perform certain animal operations
them, ſuch as eating, drinking, walking, conver-
e.—whether they actually ſaw him with their own
ard him ſpeak, with their own ears, and did han-
with their own hands. However illiterate theſe an-
ſtorians may have been, they were certainly capable
ing an adequate judgment on theſe facts; there-
ne regard ought to be paid to their united teſtimony.
rtainly they were perſons of natural good ſenſe, and
ime of writing thoſe documents they appeared to be
nposed mind. Let any unprejudiced perſon read the
'eſtament with attention, he will, we are perſuad-
not only evident marks of a ſound mind,
great integrity, ſimplicity and benevolence, quite
nt to exclude or remove all ſuſpicion of fraud, de-

colluſion in any of thoſe writings. The very
which they relate their wonderful ſtory car-
ſtion of its truth, and claims credit with every
rer. They relate it with a minute detail of
es, which is never the practice, as it would
or prudent, for falſe and deſigning men.
heir ſtory in the moſt natural, eaſy and ſim-
, juſt as plain, honeſt men would recount facts
certainly knew to be true, without the em-
s of art, falſe colouring, or needleſs aſſevera-
g the facts to ſpeak for themſelves.

Their integrity appears, from that honeſt
ith which they mention thoſe circumſtances
ht have expoſed both their Maſter and them-
ntempt. They do not conceal the place nor
their Maſter's birth, nor the meanneſs of his

It is moſt certain, too, that in all their writings there may be found the moſt evident traces of not only an honeſt, but a pious, benevolent and generous, diſpoſition. Now that perſons of ſuch an excellent character, honeſt, plain and benevolent, who breathed nothing in their whole deportment but exalted ſentiments of philanthropy and devotion, ſhould be guilty of the moſt notorious and complicated wickedneſs, without ever being detected, though they were repeatedly brought to the ſevereſt trials, before governors and kings, muſt exceed all belief: but no evidence ever yet appeared either againſt their morals or their teſtimony. If their teſtimony was falſe, they muſt know it to be ſo, and perſiſting in it, they muſt be the moſt abandoned wretches in the univerſe: for knowingly to palm a cheat upon the world, in which not only the temporal but the eternal intereſt of mankind was implicated, muſt be a crime without a name, unleſs a compound of impiety, perjury and cruelty can give it one. Herein they would have borne falſe witneſs for God, and deceived mankind in their moſt important intereſts, perſuading them to build their eternal hopes upon one whom they knew to be a vile impoſtor, who had juſtly ſuffered for his own crimes. Their crime muſt be enormous in the firſt inſtance of deception; but what muſt it ſwell to when all the innocent blood which has been ſince ſhed in the cauſe of chriſtianity is taken into the account! But beſides, it cannot be ſuppoſed that twelve or fourteen men can be found in all the earth who ſhall unite in, and carry on, ſo black a confederacy againſt all mankind through life, without detection. It is impoſſible: yes, we will venture to ſay, that, conſidering the weakneſs and the fickleneſs of human nature, and that thoſe ancient hiſtorians were ſometimes ſeparated from each other at great diſtances, under different temptations, and in very different circumſtances, till death; it is morally impoſſible that ſo many ſhould be ſo united, and ſo conſiſtent

th each other, in ſo vile and impious a ſcheme;
ray the cauſe, and diſcover the deception; eſ-
ſidering that one had the perfidy to betray his
would, we may be ſure, have betrayed the
, if there had been any. But, far from this,
an poſſeſſed his heart, yet it was not hardy
and by his perfidiouſneſs, but he repented,
his own hand, a ſacrifice to the remorſe of his
nce, and ſo added the teſtimony of his own
innocency of his injured Maſter, whom he
betrayed, to the integrity of his fellow-diſci-
he had deſerted, and to the truth of that
he had diſgraced, and went to his *own place.*
t will give weight to the arguments in favour
grity, and that they have given us a true and
on of facts, we may add, they could be un-
tation to palm a cheat upon the world, or to

; for, with barbarians and gentle nations, their bu-
was, to perſuade them to abandon the gods of their
ſtors, and to accept of, and confide in, an unknown
n, who had died by the hand of juſtice, in his own
, as a malefactor and a ſlave; could they, upon the
ciples of reaſon and common ſenſe, expect to ſucceed
arduous a work, on the ſuppoſition that they bore
witneſs for God? We think they could not; for
a nation ſoon change her gods? No. They could
nably expect nothing better than to be treat-
s fools and madmen, to be perſecuted by the rulers,
ted by the populace as blaſphemers of the gods, ſe-
rs of the people, and diſturbers of public peace and
ony, and hooted out of every corner of the earth to
h they might flee for ſhelter, and that they and their
e would ſoon ſink into perpetual oblivion. But this
not the caſe, for it is evident that the diſciples of Je-
did gain credit, which nothing but the truth and im-
ance of their doctrines could ſupport. It is a truth
h cannot be denied, that chriſtianity did ſucceed in a
wonderful and ſurpriſing manner; for not only the
ry of the New Teſtament, (which we have proved to
uthentic) but Joſephus, Clemens, Romanus, Pliny,
tullian, Juſtin Martyr, Euſebius, and many others,
were unfriendly to chriſtianity, have teſtified, that
was the rapid progreſs of chriſtianity, that myriads
the Jews believed the report of the goſpel, and flock-
o the apoſtles of Jeſus, crying out, Men and breth-
, what ſhall we do to be ſaved? and thouſands, moſt-
ſews, were initiated into the chriſtian profeſſion by the
of baptiſm, and added to the chriſtian church, in
day; and that within half a century there were
iſtian churches planted, not only at Jeruſalem, and
ughout the land of Judea, but at Rome, Corinth,
heſus, Coloſſe, Theſſalonica, Philippi, Laodicea, Smyr-
Pergamos, Thyatira, Philadelphia, Crete, Pontus,

ppadocia, Aſia, Bithynia, and in many other
much that the Apoſtle could ſay, that he had
e goſpel with ſucceſs from Jeruſalem round
yricum, in conſequence of which the gentiles
ht into obedience to the goſpel, both in word
In the next age, Pliny ſaid, that he found al-
e heathen temples deſerted: and Tertullian
all the places for public religious aſſemblies
with devout chriſtians, worſhiping God in the
riſt; except the heathen temples, which were
glected; and ſo numerous were the chriſtian
hat if they ſhould withdraw, cities, provinces,
hole countries, would in a manner be depopu-
l Juſtin Martyr, in his diſpute with Tryphon
erved, that there was no nation, Jews, Greeks
s, not excepting the clans of wandering A-

ſome into the profeſſion of their faith, by ſuch means only they never could have convinced men of the truth and importance of the chriſtian doctrines. And, though the luſts and corruptions of the human heart, the errors and ſuperſtitions of mankind, were combined to effect the overthrow of the chriſtian religion—the wit and learning of the age immediately employed to overbear and ridicule it—the princes and the rulers drew the ſword for its deſtruction, armed with terrors and death—yet we ſee it has triumphed over all oppoſition, and, like the ſtone (in Daniel's viſion) cut out of the mountain without hands, it has broken to pieces or removed whatever ſtood in its way, till it is become as a great mountain itſelf, and almoſt filled the earth.

It is vain to object, that chriſtianity was only received by, and ſpread among, the lower claſs of mankind. If the apoſtles had put the final iſſue of the cauſe they were pleading, upon the ſtrength of laboured arguments, refined reaſonings, or metaphyſical diſtinctions, by which the populace might have been entangled, loſt and deceived, there would have been ſome cauſe or room for ſuch an objection. But the truth is, they reſted the whole cauſe upon plain facts, of which the common people were as capable of judging, as the learned and philoſophic reaſoner. But the objection is not altogether founded in truth. Indeed there were not many *wiſe men* after the fleſh, not many *mighty*, nor many *noble*, found on the liſt of thoſe who firſt embraced the goſpel, or yielded to the force of evidence by which it was ſupported. Yet there was a goodly number who boldly came forward and bore their united teſtimony to the truth and importance of the chriſtian religion, who were of the firſt claſs of [illegible]ilians. There were ſeveral members of the Jewiſh [illegible]hedrim—Nicodemus, and Joſeph of Arimathea; were ſeveral officers of the Roman army—Pontius [illegible], the Roman governor, Cornelius, the centurion of the

band, and Lisias, tribune and first magistrate
overnor; Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Pa-
sius, the Areopagite, president of the supreme
thens, a person of great dignity; and there
rable domestics of Cæsar's household: we
Julius, captain of the guards, who had the
Paul and the other prisoners from Cæsarea to
many others, who were in the upper class of
But, if there had been none of this grade who
ginning had embraced christianity, it would
roved what our Saviour said was an evidence
of his mission—The poor have the gospel
nto them, and blessed is he who shall not be
me: implying, that men of this class were
to receive the plain and simple truths of the
the rich, the great, and the men of the world.
is the gospel did succeed in a very remark-

wonders and ſigns, which God did by him, as ye ſelves alſo know. And it is equally certain, that the geliſts and apoſtles were commiſſioned from hea- and were divinely inſpired; for they were able to real and uncontrouled miracles, in atteſtation of commiſſion, and in confirmation of the doctrines they preached. And this may be proved from the d hiſtory of the New Teſtament. And, as we have d thoſe writings to be ancient and authentic, we equal regard to them in point of evidence as to other ancient credible and well-ſupported hiſtory, o more. And theſe ancient records ſay, that when ord Jeſus choſe his twelve apoſtles to be his conſtant dants, and his future ſpecial meſſengers, he in the ning of the third year of his public miniſtry com- med them to preach the goſpel, and endowed them rk all kinds of miracles; for it is ſaid that he called unto him, and gave them power againſt all unclean , and to heal all manner of ſickneſs and all manner eaſes among the people. And he ſaid unto them, e forth and preach the goſpel, ſaying, The kingdom aven is at hand. Heal the ſick, cleanſe the lepers, ut devils, and raiſe the dead. Freely have you re- d, freely give. The ſame commiſſion, accompanied ſimilar powers, he gave to ſeventy others, a few hs after; when it was remarked, that he ſent them to preach the goſpel by pairs—two and two; and id unto them, Go your way; behold I ſend you as lambs among wolves; and into whatſoever city nter, and they receive you, eat ſuch things as are fore you; and heal the ſick who are therein, and h, ſaying, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto Behold I give unto you power to tread upon ſer- and ſcorpions, and over all the power of the ene- and nothing by any means ſhall hurt you. Theſe y-two perſons, with the apoſtle Paul, who was after-

wards

rds joined, include the whole number of
thors under whoſe patronage and direc
ſtament was compiled. Now, as all th
ſſioned, endowed with the power of wor
d ſent forth to preach the goſpel, ſo they
l miracles in confirmation of the goſp
eached, though the particular miracl
ought, on what occaſion, and the effec
ctly recorded. If all which Jeſus ſaid
which was ſaid and done by theſe eight
ſſengers, had been written, the whole
rcely have contained the books. But i
ve an account of the ſucceſs of their firſt
ſeventy had made their circuit, they ret
aſter, and informed him that the very de
t to them through his name: q. d. W
abled not only to cure all manner of diſ

s; nay, Luke aſſerts, that God wrought ſpecial mi-
s by the hands of Paul, ſo that from his body were
ght unto the ſick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and
iſeaſes departed from them, and the evil ſpirits went
f them, upon the diſeaſed or vexed perſons being
ied by thoſe clothes which were brought from
's body, or after being uſed or worn by him. And,
es thoſe authentic records which affirm that all the
les, both the ſeventy and the twelve, were inveſted
this power, all the hiſtorians near that date, and who
preſerved any memoirs of the apoſtles' writings,
ines and lives, have agreed that they all had power
ork miracles, and wherever they went, preaching
oſpel, they actually did work real and wondrous
cles in confirmations of the doctrines they preached,
hat their miracles were of the ſame kind with their
ines—*beneficent*, extended to the diſtreſſed, or wrought
miſerable objects.

real, undoubted miracle of a benevolent kind,
ght by a perſon of unblemiſhed character, in favour
ctrines of the ſame kind, ſuch as the goſpel doctrines
carry with them an irreſiſtible evidence, and prove
nd diſpute that the perſon is divinely inſpired who
eſted with ſuch powers, and is thereby eminently fit-
o diſcharge the duties of his miſſion. We grant,
nded miracles, or the appearance of real miracles,
ght by perſons of bad or ſuſpicious characters, and
to be wrought to gain a favourite point of ſmall or
mal importance, not of a general, benevolent nature,
ot ſufficient either to prove the perſon claiming ſuch
r to be under a divine influence, or that the doctrine
livers under the umbrage of ſuch miraculous power
ine inſpiration. And how far wicked and deſigning
may be permitted, under the influence of an evil
, to impoſe upon the ignorant, by lying wonders or
rently ſupernatural operations, we do not know; or

how

w far craft, or what is done by legerdem
hand, may deceive unwary minds, by
eal miracle, is as hard to say. Mirac
found to abound greatly among the
biſh of the church of Rome, who hav
ft or diabolical influence ſo far, that if it
y would have deceived the very elect.

But the miracles wrought in ſupport of
ation are quite of another ſort, and ſupp
ferent evidence. The character of the
ure of the miracles, and the tendency of
ſupport of which they have been wroug
ays taken into the account, in order to
ght of evidence. Therefore our Saviou
o man who can do a miracle in my na
ak lightly or evil of me.

art in his wiſe men, and brought the magi to
that Moſes's claim to divine inſpiration was juſt;
en they ſaw the inconteſtible miracles which he
t before them ſo far ſuperior to what they by the
nagic, or ſatannic influence, could work, they
his is the finger of God. The ſame argument de-
d the diſpute between the prophets of Baal and
het Elijah, and produced a conviction in favour
ſpiration of Elijah, which the idolaters could not
d. In one word; the ſame argument determin-
inſpiration of Paul, when certain Jews, exorciſts,
abandoned characters, attempted to eject a de-
making a profane uſe of the name of Jeſus,
'aul preached, and thereby intended to diſhonour
ed name by preſſing it into the ſervice of conju-
but they failed in the daring attempt, for the
whom the evil ſpirit was, leaped upon them,
demon, ſpeaking in the man, said, Jeſus I know,
l I know, but who are ye? and he overcame
that they hardly eſcaped, naked and wounded,
s of ſcorn and deriſion to all who beheld them.
n the miracles wrought by Paul ſo far exceeded
etched attempts by the ſons of Sceva, a general
n was produced in favour of Paul and his in-
. The conſequence was, that thoſe who uſed
cked arts confeſſed their evil deeds, and burnt the
ith them; and the word of the Lord, preached
, prevailed over all the works of darkneſs.

ier argument in favour of the inſpiration of the
is, that they were endowed with a rich variety
ual gifts, which wonderfully fitted and enabled
deliver the whole counſel of God, and which
em above the weakneſs of human nature, in the
diſcharge of the duties of their miſſion. And
itual gifts have been reckoned up, and ranged in
per order, by the apoſtle Paul, in his firſt epiſtle

thians, 12th chapter, from the 8th verſe. To
, is given by the Spirit the word of wiſdom,
he word of knowledge, by the ſame Spirit;
faith, by the ſame Spirit; to another prophe-
ther the diſcerning of ſpirits, to another di-
of tongues, to another the interpretation of
d that wonderful gift, which ſeems peculiar
les, the diſpenſing the miraculous gifts of the
t to others by the laying on of their hands.
h we may not, at this diſtance of time, fully
d the nature, the extent and uſefulneſs, of
extraordinary gifts, yet we cannot but ſee
ere all admirably adapted to ſerve the purpo-
ation, and became a rich and neceſſary furni-
onderfully qualified them, as inſpired teach-
agate with ſucceſs the goſpel of the Son of
r, allowing the apoſtles to be poſſeſſed of thoſe

nd it is moſt obvious, that the important and eſſen-
doctrines of natural religion are eſtabliſhed and con-
ed by the goſpel revelation; particularly, the be-
and perfections of God—his univerſal providence,
moral government—a ſtate of future exiſtence, and
ewards and puniſhments in an inviſible world: theſe
doctrines which are agreeable to the light of nature,
which both reaſon and conſcience inculcate as im-
ant and intereſting, founded in nature, and reſult
the eternal and immutable reaſon of things.
ſe very doctrines are ſet in a clearer light by the goſ-
being illuſtrated and eſtabliſhed by the New Teſta-
t revelation; which is at leaſt one preſumptive evi-
e of an internal nature, that it is from God, as the
rary doctrines would prove that it was not from
: for we cannot ſuppoſe that God would inſpire men
veal a ſyſtem of religion, the leading doctrines of
h ſhould deny his own perfections, and contradict the
of nature, and the reaſon of man; nor could we re-
ſuch a revelation as from him, ſo long as we re-
the natural idea of his being and perfections, provi-
e and government, or have the uſe of our own rea-
and conſcience, by which we are enabled to judge of
rines, and weigh the arguments by which they are to
efended.

ſus Chriſt declared that he came into the world to
us the Father, and to reveal him, and to give us
t apprehenſions of him; and he complained that the
s did not know the Father nor him—had no juſt and
tical ſenſe of his being, preſence, purity, providence
grace; that they were groſsly ignorant of himſelf,
characters he was to ſuſtain, the nature of his king-
, and the gracious deſigns of his miſſion; though to
w God, and him whom he had ſent, was eternal life.
l the apoſtle Paul, when he ſtood in the midſt of the
t of the Areopagites, ſaid, Ye men of Athens, I per-
ceive

n all things you are too ſuperſtitious: the God ignorantly worſhip, him declare I unto you. hink we may venture to ſay, that the doctrines nts revealed in the New Teſtament, rightly are agreeable to, and directly tend to illuſ- iſh and enforce, the principles and doctrines religion, from motives and conſiderations beſt act upon reaſonable and ingenuous minds.

internal evidence of the inſpiration of the ment is, that all the moſt important duties e to God, our neighbour and ourſelves, are lainly, inculcated ſeriouſly, and urged warm- ſpirit of love and condeſcenſion, as every can- muſt acknowledge. It ſeemed to be the firſt the Supreme Revealer to clear the moral he corrupt gloſſes which the doctors and pha-

erits of his Son. And thus he drew them to obedience
th the cords of love, and the bands of a man. But,
t ſelf-love, prejudice and partiality ſhould darken the
ind, miſlead, or make the path of duty, in ſome inſtan-
s, intricate, in relative and ſocial life, or where intereſt,
ſapprehended, might bribe the judgment, he laid down
at excellent rule of equity and love, the propriety and
ce of which every candid and honeſt mind muſt feel—
ı you would that others ſhould do to you, do you even
to them; for this is the law and the prophets. A
re conſummate rule of genuine morality there cannot
, or more uſeful in civil, ſocial and commercial life.
is apoſtles preached the ſame doctrines, inculcated
: ſame rules, and urged the ſame things, and from ſimi-
· motives; for their doctrines were all according to
dlineſs. They conſtantly maintained that love was
: fulfilling of the law, and that the moſt ſublime acts
religion externally were mere emptineſs and ſound,
d in the ſight of God of little worth, when they did not
iginate in love, and operate according to its dictates.
ey particularly inculcated relative duties, regulating
e conduct of parents towards their children, and of
ildren towards their parents—of maſters towards their
rvants, and of ſervants towards their maſters—of ma-
ſtrates towards their ſubjects, and ſubjects towards
eir rulers; joining with thoſe moral precepts and rules
ſocial life an amiable and a bright aſſemblage of chriſ-
an virtues—faith, patience, reſignation, meekneſs, hu-
ility, forbearance and forgiveneſs, againſt which there
no law, nor can there be any objection. Nor is the
ſpel revelation leſs careful to enforce the duties we owe
ourſelves; ſobriety, temperance and ſelf-denial. Though
e goſpel revelation does not flatter our unruly paſſions,
r indulge our inordinate appetites, or carnal ſenſuality,
t lays a reſtraint upon diſorderly paſſions, and puts the
ins of government into the hands of reaſon and faith,

dulges us with all the enjoyments of the ſen
lie within the ſacred bounds of reaſon and
t indulges us with all which is conſiſtent with
ove to God, and a ſincere ſubmiſſion to his Son;
ore that a wiſe and good man can deſire. And,
ay be kept within thoſe ſacred bounds of tem-
nd ſobriety, the goſpel revelation unveils to us
s of the heavenly world, and brings thoſe bright-
full to view, that we may not be captivated
faſcinating objects of ſenſe; and under theſe
d animating views it bids us to ſet our affections
above, not on things of the earth, which are
the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the
ich are unſeen are eternal. Nay, the whole
f the New Teſtament uniformly teach all men,
ere, that, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts,
ld live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in the

rnal ordinances: it never was designed to enrich or andize its author or its professors, or to make a did worldly appearance; as its ordinances are few, and simple, calculated chiefly for spiritual use, to ove in the spiritual and divine life.

nother internal evidence of the inspiration of the Testament is, that it contains doctrines, precepts promises peculiarly adapted to the present fallen of human nature. The New Testament alone re- great and glorious truths which lay hid from ages but are made manifest by the gospel, and with the ledge of which man's final salvation stands connected. igh some of them are not yet wholly divested of all ry, yet so much light is thrown upon all of them as is ient to found our faith, and to regulate our conduct: r instance, the doctrine of the Trinity; that there hree who bear record in heaven; the Father, the and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one vided Essence, or United Deity—the union of the n and divine natures in the one incarnate Redeemer— nlightening, the quickening, the sanctifying and the orting influences of the Blessed Spirit—the reconcil- f mercy and justice in the recovery of fallen man; God can be just, and yet justify the sinner who be- th in Jesus—the immortality of grace, as an incor- ble seed—the resurrection of the body, and future rds and punishments. Besides these, there is a rich ty of truths which result from them, which relate to Christ in his mediatorial character, and the peculiar s which the Holy Spirit sustains, in beginning, car- on and perfecting a work of grace in the human , in illuminating, directing and supporting the saint gh this vale of tears to glory; truths sublime in selves, and which strike the mind in a very power- nner, and call forth both the natural and gracious ples of gratitude, the noblest sources of genuine,

uniform

d acceptable obedience. Theſe are the main
nd ſubjects of the New Teſtament, which are
t all, diſcernible by the light of nature, or un-
ſon. This wiſdom is from above: the earth
not in me, and the ſea ſaith, It is not in me:
knoweth the way thereof, and he alone under-
e place thereof; and therefore a revelation of
muſt be from him, and thoſe perſons who firſt
hem to the world muſt have been inſpired by
revelation came not by the will of man, but
f old ſpake as they were moved by the Holy
he magi of the Eaſt, the ſages of heathen
Greece, or the religious philoſophers of modern
admire the wiſdom, the power and the good-
l in the works of creation and providence, and
tention to the book of nature for inſtruction;

the loftineſs of man is brought low, and the haughtineſs of man is humbled, and the Lord alone is exalted, in the ſalvation of ſinful men. Therefore it is a mediatorial plan, exactly ſuited to our fallen ſtate; no cunningly deviſed fable, but a wonderful ſcheme of wiſdom and grace, laid by the Father of men and angels, who perfectly knows our frame, and what our wants are, and the ways and means by which we, fallen into ſin and darkneſs, may be enlightened, reclaimed, and reſtored to a ſtate of purity and happineſs, and whereby his own honour might be ſecured and advanced.

We might now cloſe the argument, but there are a few *external evidences* of the truth, importance and divine authenticity of the New Teſtament inſpiration, which offer themſelves to our conſideration, and which have not yet been fully inveſtigated, which may throw ſome further light on the ſubject, or add weight to what has been already offered, and therefore in the cloſe cannot well be omitted: as, for inſtance, the perſons who firſt preached and publiſhed the goſpel revelation ſuſtained ſuch characters, and were in ſuch circumſtances, as we had juſt reaſon to expect that perſons charged with a revelation from heaven would be; viz. perſons of eminent piety, and in low worldly circumſtances. We can hardly ſuppoſe that God would favour and honour a vicious man with any very extraordinary diſcoveries of his will, or make him the main inſtrument of publiſhing a revelation to others, the evident deſign of which was, to make men wiſe, virtuous and happy. That God would not employ men of vicious characters, deſtitute of piety and goodneſs, in ſo benevolent and pious a deſign as the revelation of a holy religion, is a truth which mankind are agreed

The phariſees ſpoke the ſenſe of mankind, when they ſaid to the man who had been born blind, and was miraculouſly reſtored to his ſight, Give God the praiſe; as the man who pretends to have wrought the miracle,

he

is a ſinner, and is not of God, for he kee
bath. The concluſion is juſt, if he was a
ot not the ſabbath; but the hypotheſis wa
s not a ſinner, and he kept the ſabbath, an
s of charity and devotion, which plainly
underſtood its original inſtitution—that
s made for man, and not man for the ſab
evangeliſts and apoſtles, the firſt promulg
ſpel, were eminent for their piety and ben
ir enemies themſelves were obliged to
ough they were narrowly watched, ſtrictl
erely threatened, unjuſtly impriſoned, and
ned, yet no impiety or immorality was ever
them: the worſt crime that was fairly p
m was, that they publicly preached the g
of the bleſſed God freely: and Pilate,

Jeſus Chriſt had appeared, as the Jews expected
ıeir Meſſiah would, in the character of a temporal
, and had armed himſelf with the civil ſword, and
in making proſelytes to his religion, as Mahomet
ne; or if he and they had made uſe of their mira-
power either to enrich or aggrandize themſelves,
ratify a ſenſual appetite, or to puniſh thoſe who
not receive their perſons or their doctrines, chriſ-
would have loſt much of its glory and external
ce, and have ſunk to a level with other impoſtures.
it pleaſed God to reveal the words of eternal life
eriſhing world, he ſaw fit to commit the rich trea-
earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power
appear to be of God.

ɔther external evidence of the truth and authenticity
chriſtian religion is, the ſurpriſing manner in which
been propagated in the world. If we ſhould take
exiſting circumſtances which attended the firſt pro-
ıtion of the goſpel, we muſt acknowledge that it is
:rful and ſurpriſing that *truth* itſelf ſhould meet with
ccefs which the goſpel has done, with all thoſe diſ-
tages which the firſt promulgation of the goſpel
:ed under. The firſt preachers of the goſpel had to
ıd with the power and policy, the ſuperſtition
igotry, of the world: but they triumphed over all
tion, and the goſpel in their hands made ſuch a ra-
read, as plainly demonſtrated a very extraordinary
oſition of Providence in its favour; ſo that, in the
age of the prophet, not only one of a family, and
a city, were taken and brought to Zion—incorpora-
to the chriſtian church—but, ſo did the Lord haſten
is time, that a little one became a thouſand, and a
one became a ſtrong nation. And, as the apoſtles
remarkably ſucceſsful themſelves, ſo the divine ſeed
they ſowed ſprung up in the next age, and bore a
ample harveſt; inſomuch that one of their hiſtori-

ans

ined, that the heathen temples, which uſed to
l with devout worſhippers, were now nearly de-
l, if the chriſtians ſhould withdraw themſelves,
s and provinces would be almoſt depopulated.
ve account for this, but by acknowledging that
f the Lord was with the firſt preachers of the
that therefore ſuch multitudes believed, and
o the Lord from their vain idols, to ſerve the
the true God. Such a ſmall fountain could
read itſelf into ſuch a mighty river, which,
rdan, overflowed all its banks, and covered a
of the face of the earth, if it had not iſſued from
ry of God, and been directed by his almighty
d this new ſyſtem of religion ſoothed men's
gthened their prejudices, promoted their ſecu-
s, and cheriſhed their pride and ambition, we
accounted for its rapid ſpread, as we have for

came to paſs exactly as he had foretold, and at the time when he had predicted, with all the attendant circumſtances, as related by Joſephus, and others no ways friendly to chriſtianity. He alſo foretold his own death, what kind of death he ſhould die, the time he ſhould continue in a ſtate of death, the time when he ſhould riſe from the dead, where he would firſt appear to his diſciples, meet with them, and bleſs them, and diſpenſe to them the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, and that after forty days he would aſcend to his Father and their Father, to his God and their God: all which took place exactly according to the prediction, and, being public acts, or things which were not done in a corner, a cloud of witneſſes have teſtified the reality of the facts; and ſcarcely was there any one who was ſo great a ſtranger in Jeruſalem, as not to know thoſe things.

In one word; the preſent ſtate of the Jews is a continued accompliſhment of the prophecies of Chriſt concerning them: and it is not much ſhort of a continued miracle, that, notwithſtanding the deſtruction they met with from the Romans when their city and temple were taken and burnt, and their diſperſion afterwards among all nations, perſecuted by ſome, deſpiſed by all, hated and ill-treated by many, yet that they remain a very numerous people, tenacious of their religion, though their anceſtors were prone to idolatry; and therefore ſtill remain the depoſitories of their own ancient records, on which depends ſo much of the evidence of chriſtianity. And their remaining a diſtinct people, though diſperſed among all nations, without being connected with any, leaves room for the accompliſhment of thoſe other prophecies of the New Teſtament which relate to their future reſtoration, when the fulneſs of the gentiles ſhall be gathered in, when all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved.

Thus we have taken a view of the principal arguments made uſe of in ſupport of the truth and importance of

ſtianity; and they amount to this—That
n theory a probable thing, and therefor
, conſidering the benevolent nature of G
n ſtate of mankind, we had reaſon to e
t to hope, that a revelation from heave
le of the will of God to man, which wo
t to found his faith, and direct his conduc
the way to life eternal; and we declare
we have ſuch a revelation in the New
we may receive it as a faithful ſaying,
ll acceptation. Let us cordially receiv
onform to it, and build our future hopes
e rock of our ſalvation. Some may boa
n of nature, and deſpiſe a revealed reli
ary; but they are much miſtaken. Adam
eeded a revelation to form a ſyſtem of rel
fallen into a ſtate of moral depravity, fi

edgment of the truth, that they may recover
elves out of the ſnare of the devil, who are now led
e by him at his pleaſure. And, while we pity ma-
ans and heathens, we have much more reaſon to
e the caſe of thoſe who live in Emanuel's-land, the
of viſion, but by their careleſſneſs, obſtinacy and
ity turn it into the valley of the ſhadow of death.
more melancholy reflection than this is, that a nation
had boaſted that they were the bulwark of the
ic church of Chriſt, ſhould become the avowed
es to the throne of Jeſus, and zealouſly employ
meaſure in their power to exterminate his holy
n from the earth. They have publicly denied the
ho made them, and Jeſus who has redeemed them,
aced on the throne of God and the Redeemer fic-
deities, under the names of reaſon, nature, philoſo-
liberty, equality, and diſintereſted moral virtue.
they adore, and pull down the altars of papacy
ey may eſtabliſh a ſyſtem of philoſophical idolatry
dangerous ground of impiety and atheiſm. Will
od be avenged on ſuch a nation as this? and what
ey do in the day thereof?

infer the reaſonableneſs and propriety of impartially
ing into the evidence of the chriſtian religion. It
ity we owe to God, to the cauſe and intereſt of
hriſt, and to the peace and comfort of our own
The marks of truth and divinity are ſo obvious,
they are attended to with candour and impartiality,
erſuaded that they will ſtrike the eye which is ſin-
forcibly as to carry conviction home to the heart,
rough the concurring influences of the Spirit of
make them, not almoſt, but altogether, chriſtians.

ne, the chriſtian revelation is, in its own nature,
al; and, if we receive Jeſus Chriſt as the founder
holy religion, ſo we muſt walk in him: for the
grace

ce of God, which appears in the gospel, teach
n, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lu
uld live soberly, righteously and godly in the
rld, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus
o eternal life.



Diſcourſe VI.

The Chriſtian Church.

REV. ii. 7.

e that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches.

WE often read in the Scriptures of a Church—the church of God—the church of Chriſt—of a hurch at Corinth, at Epheſus, Galatia, Rome, and even i Cæſar's houſe: and in the Revelations of St. John we ad of ſeven churches in Aſia. In our text we are com-anded by the great Head of the church to hear and bſerve what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches. That e may do this it is neceſſary to know whom we are to derſtand by the Spirit, and what by the churches. By e Spirit we are undoubtedly to underſtand, the Holy irit of God—the third perſon in the ſacred Trinity—e Spirit of inſpiration, by whoſe influences, and under hoſe direction, the viſion opened upon St. John in his niſhment: therefore it is ſaid, that he was in the Spirit i the Lord's day when he received theſe orders to at-nd to what the Spirit had to ſay unto the churches. nd by the church or churches, in the writings of the ew Teſtament, we are generally to underſtand, the riſtian church, which is a ſelect number of chriſtians, ing together to profeſs their faith in Chriſt, and to

living and true God through him. Theſe
, generally idolaters, carried away unto dumb
when they received the goſpel which was ſent
they renounced idolatry, and agreed to wor-
o obſerve the inſtitutions of chriſtianity—bap-
e Lord's ſupper—as preſcribed in the goſpel.
called a church, ſelected from the reſt of the
eing in the eſſential doctrines of the goſpel, and
walk in all the ſtatutes and ordinances of the
Chriſt blameleſs: they are ſaid to be ſanctified
onſecrated to him, and, uniting with him by
onſidered as members of him, and called to be
d, though we may not conclude from thence
ere all certainly gracious perſons, they were
ſo; it was their profeſſion and public charac-
l thoſe who agreed in the eſſential doctrines
l profeſſed their faith in Chriſt, and lived

Jesus, their Lord and ours. The christian Indians on this continent were called, by the heathen tribes, the praying Indians: so the primitive christians were described, by their heathen neighbours, as praying to God through Christ, and as keeping a fast to Christ, and as being united one to another in love.

We shall, in further pursuing the subject, shew something more of the nature of a primitive christian church—the end of its incorporation—the necessary qualifications of its members—and then inquire what the Spirit saith to the churches.

I. The primitive christian church has always been distinguished as consisting of visible and invisible members; and perhaps this is the only distinction that is necessary to be made; and Jesus Christ is the head of both. The whole Jewish nation were of the visible church; for it appears that they were called out of the world of idolaters; and God entered into covenant with them and their children, under the visible and external rite of circumcision; and they publicly professed themselves the people of God: and their receiving the seal of that covenant made them the visible church of God. When that people had corrupted the doctrines of their religion which they received of God, through the ministration of angels and of Moses, and had become very lax and irregular in their practice, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men, God sent his Son to correct their errors, to reform their practice, and to rescue his church from that ruin to which they were fast tending; and, by the administrations of his Son, and the ministrations of his Spirit, he established upon a broader and more sure basis for the future. his church, which before stood upon the prophets, rested upon the apostles, Jesus Christ himself being chief corner-stone; and was therefore called [illegible]: Before, it was limited to one nation; now Jesus

irected his diſciples to act upon a larger ſcale
ating the doctrines of the church, and regu-
ractice: he told them that they ſhould no lon-
fined to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael;
re extended their commiſſion to all the world,
o ye forth into all the world, and preach
to every creature, teaching all nations, bap-
n in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy
l bid them do whatſoever I have commanded
o, I am with you always, unto the end of the
that from this time the viſible church became
The church being ſpread through wide-er-
ons, among foreign and diſtant nations, it ſoon
poſſible for thoſe who received the doctrines
med to the maxims of chriſtianity to aſſemble.
e; they therefore formed particular aſſemblies
places for the ſame general purpoſe—the

faith in, and obedience to, Chriſt, their reſolution to walk worthy of him, and their mutual engagements to watch over one another in love, provoking one another to love and good-works. This leads us to ſhew—

II. The end and deſign of their incorporation: and this is in general for their better edification; that all the members of the chriſtian viſible church may enjoy thoſe means which are beſt adapted to their growth in grace: for Chriſt's kingdom is not of this world, local and political, but moral and ſpiritual; ſeated in the hearts of his ſubjects; and it is by the uſe of means, and the miniſtrations of the Spirit, that they are here to be trained up into a meetneſs for the kingdom of glory. Knowledge, holineſs and love are three main qualifications for that kingdom: for without knowledge the heart cannot be good; without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord; and without love there can be no enjoyment. And, as Chriſt Jeſus gave himſelf for his church, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and ſanctify her wholly, and preſent her to his Father a glorious church, without ſpot or blemiſh, he obtained the promiſe of the Father of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, and ſent them down upon his church. Theſe were both internal and external; and among the external were apoſtles, evangeliſts, paſtors and teachers, for this profeſſed purpoſe—that the body of Chriſt, the church, might be edified in love, till all her members come, in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt; and, ſpeaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Chriſt, from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, receiveth an increaſe, edifying itſelf in love.

Thus the church was enriched with the aſcenſion gifts of her exalted Head; ſelected from the heathen and ungodly world, choſen in Chriſt, incorporated into one viſible

y, that they might be holy and without blame
in love; and, for their better edification, and
venience, are incorporated into diſtinct aſſem-
r one general bond of union; that Chriſt may
heir hearts by faith, and, being rooted and
n love, they may be able to comprehend, with
rm the whole body of the inviſible church,
length and breadth, the height and depth, of
Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge; that each
ay be filled with all the fulneſs of God.

are in the next place to ſhew what are the neceſ-
cations of church members: and this inquiry
it two queſtions, which ought to be anſwered,

may or ought a church to require of a can-
offers himſelf for admiſſion into it?

a church must rightly understand the plain and
l doctrines of christianity, and be so fully convin-
the true character of the Lord Jesus Christ, and
th and importance of his religion, as to em-
as theirs, and make it the rule of their conduct,
foundation of their future hopes. These were
blicly to profess their faith in Christ, and their
ce to him: and, upon this profession, they were
d into the christian church, and to all its ordi-
and privileges, as members in full communion.
who were received into the church on the day of
st received the word preached by the apostles
. e. they received the doctrines which they had
them not only as truths, but as truths of personal
rnal concern to them; and therefore believed;
ıblicly professing their faith in Christ, and the
s of his gospel, were admitted into the church, to
ıber of three thousand in one day. So also the
was first taught by Philip to understand what he
d out of the prophecy of Isaiah concerning Christ,
truth of the gospel: then he professed his faith in
nd was baptized, and added to the visible church,
not yet admitted to any particular incorporate
And Lydia first attended to the things spoken by
ıd her heart was opened, so that she cordially re-
he christian doctrines, professed her faith in them,
s admitted into the church, and baptized at Ma-
. The people of Samaria were convinced of, and
l, the truth of the gospel doctrines preached unto
ıy Philip, and were received by him into the
and admitted to special ordinances.—Therefore
dent that every christian church may and ought
re, of every one who offers himself as a candidate
ission, a knowledge of the plain and essential doc-
the gospel, and a credible profession of his faith
t, and obedience to him, with a life which corres-

ponds

ls with ſuch a profeſſion: and every o
competent knowledge, and from a rationa
can make this profeſſion, and who leads
r life, has undoubtedly a right to all the h
ileges of a chriſtian church; and no chu
tandingly and ſcripturally refuſe ſuch a ca
ion; for this is the beſt evidence we can
g poſſeſſed of the neceſſary qualifications
nber of a viſible church, and this is all that
ired of candidates for admiſſion, and th
n to form a judgment of charity grounde
and reaſon.

ut, after all, there will be found unſoun
re will be bad and good men, ſincere b
uiſed hypocrites, found in the viſible ch
er preſent imperfect and militant ſtate: f
of heaven is likened to a net caſt into th

diſtinct knowledge of the goſpel plan of ſalvation, by grace through faith, as to be fully convinced of the truth and importance of it; and, in conſequence of this full conviction, really believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Saviour whom God has provided, with whom, therefore, he can truſt his ſalvation, in the way of faith and holy obedience; reſolving at the ſame time conſcientiouſly to do the will of God, as it ſhall be made known to him. Such a perſon finds enough in himſelf to ſatisfy him that it is his immediate duty to offer himſelf as a cadidate for admiſſion into the church, and cannot excuſe a delay of it on any principles of fair reaſon, or divine revelation.

Many ſober, thinking perſons, who have this knowledge, this faith, theſe ſincere deſires, and conſcientious purpoſes, may find ſo many corruptions in their hearts, ſo many deviations from duty, and that they fall ſo far ſhort of what they ſhould be, and really wiſh to be, that they dare not offer themſelves. But, if we were to neglect our duty till our corruptions were wholly ſubdued, till all our fears were diſſipated, and all our weakneſſes removed, and till our faith and hope had ripened into full aſſurance, one great end of the chriſtian inſtitutions would be ſuperceded. But this is not to be expected till that which is perfect is come, and we ſhall join the general aſſembly, and the church of the Firſt-born in her triumphant ſtate. No, my friends, though you may find many corruptions ſtill remaining in your hearts, and many involuntary irregularities in your lives, which you daily lament, you may ſtill poſſeſs every neceſſary qualification of a worthy communicant required by our Saviour or his apoſtles. And that very humble ſenſe of your own ſinfulneſs, weakneſs and imperfection, is one of the beſt evidences you can have that you are well qualified for acts of holy communion at chriſtian ordinances. That, inſtead of keeping you back from your duty, ſhould animate and encourage you to do it without delay: for certainly

ous, humble and conſcientious man will wiſh
w and when to do his duty in the beſt manner
tteſt time, and attentively hear what the Spi-
he churches on this head; and what he ſays
t bodies of profeſſing chriſtians is ſpoken by
o the churches in general; for the inſpired
e holy men, who ſpoke as they were moved by
hoſt.

now attend to what the Spirit ſays to the
out admitting members into the church, and
mmunion in holy ordinances. And does not
y that they ſhall be admitted on the founda-
God has laid in Zion, which is, the prophets
, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-
which ye are builded together, through the
abitation of God? i. e. it was upon a credi-



ſincere and ſincere profeſſion of their faith in Chriſt, and their obedience to him—a profeſſion which is not merely the reſult of reaſoning upon obvious principles, but a ſincere profeſſion of their faith in Chriſt, and in the revealed truths of the goſpel, ſo deeply impreſſed on the heart, by the regenerating Spirit of God, that it becomes the principle of love and obedience—a faith which unites the believer to Chriſt, and conforms him to his amiable example. This is further evidenced from what John relates: When Jeſus ſaw many, who had followed him for a while, but wanting this principle of love and obedience forſook him and walked no more with him; upon this defection, he aſked the twelve, Will ye alſo go away? Peter, as before, anſwered for himſelf and his fellow diſciples, To whom, Lord, ſhall we go? Thou haſt the words of eternal life; and we believe, and are ſure, that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of the Living God.

This is what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches about admitting members into their incorporate body; viz. that they ſhall be received upon this foundation; upon this profeſſion, honeſtly and underſtandingly made, and ſupported by a temper and life which correſpond with the goſpel. And agreeably to this we find that the apoſtles ever conducted towards thoſe who were candidates for admiſſion, or to be incorporated into a chriſtian church, either from the Jewiſh or gentile nations. When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he reminded them of the foundation they were built upon, and ſaid, Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid. I have planted you, Apollos has watered you, but God gave the increaſe.

[illegible] ſerious and credible profeſſion, underſtandingly attended with evidence of their ſincerity, was all the apoſtles required of thoſe who were incorporated the chriſtian church under their adminiſtration,

or

or of individuals when added to any particular church? This was their conſtant inſtruction, direction and requirement: Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and be baptized that your ſins may be blotted out: Repent and believe the goſpel, that you may be ſaved: If thou believeſt with all thy heart, thou mayeſt be baptized, or admitted to all chriſtian ordinances, or the free enjoyment of chriſtian privileges. This was all which the apoſtles required of the thouſands who were converted to the chriſtian faith by Peter's preaching on the day of pentecoſt; and theſe were on that day all admitted to what we call full communion; for it is ſaid, Theſe all were added to the church, and continued ſtedfaſt in the apoſtles' doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer. This ſerious and credible profeſſion was all which was required of the eunuch by Philip, and this was all which was required of the jailor, Lydia, and others, by the apoſtles. On this liberal baſis the apoſtles were careful to maintain chriſtian communion and fellowſhip, not ſuffering the punctilios of ceremony to divide them, to interrupt their domeſtic peace, or chriſtian fellowſhip: therefore ſaid the apoſtle Paul, when writing to the Corinthian church, Let every one who is called of the Lord ſo walk, for ſo ordain I in all the churches: for circumciſion and uncircumciſion availeth nothing, but keeping the commandments of God.—This leads us to inquire further—

What ſaith the Spirit to the churches with reſpect to their general conduct and treatment of one another in their incorporate ſtate?

We ſhall find that it is the voice of the Spirit to the churches, that they walk in love and charity one towards another. The Spirit ſaith, by the apoſtle Peter, to the churches in general, that they ſhall love one another as brethren, that they ſhall be pitiful and courteous. Paul, by the ſame Spirit, when cloſing his epiſtle to the Epheſian church, breathes out this benevolent benediction—

Peace

be to the brethren, and love with faith from God
ather. Grace be with all them who love our Lord
Chriſt in ſincerity. To the church at Rome he
Let love be without diſſimulation; be kindly affec-
l one towards another, with brotherly love. When
g to the Philippian church, he conjures them by the
; that if there was any conſolation in Chriſt, if any
rt in love, if any fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any
s of mercies, fulfil ye my joy; that ye be like-mind-
ving the ſame love, being of one accord, of one
To another church, by the ſame Spirit, he ob-
; that he need not write to them concerning brother-
e, for they themſelves were taught of God to love
nother. And the epiſtle to the Hebrews cloſes with
ound advice, Let brotherly love continue.

reeably with this, the Spirit ſaith to the churches,
hey ſhall watch over one another in love; that they
upon this liberal ſpirit, and maintain a holy diſci-
in each particular church; that, from the ſame
ple, they warn and admoniſh every member of their
unity who is unruly, or who walks not according
: maxims and rules of the goſpel: Now we exhort
brethren (ſaid the Spirit to the church at Theſſalo-
: that you warn them who are unruly, that you
rt the feeble-minded, ſupport the weak, be patient
ds all.

d the Spirit, by the united voice of all the apoſtles,
: moſt ſolemn manner, commanded them of the ſame
h, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, to withdraw com-
on from them who walked diſorderly, and would
e reclaimed: and our Saviour, who received un-
rable gifts of the Holy Spirit, having eſtabliſhed his
h in the world, gave her a moſt excellent and ex-
e rule for the direction of her diſcipline among
r members; which rule we have in the 18th of

tthew, 15th, 16th and 17th verſes: whic
nderſtood and applied in the following
member of our own body or communit
erly, or is chargeable with any direct
nchriſtian conduct, and we are made acqu
ither by credible information, or our o
wledge; we, or any of the offended me
o the offender in a private and friendly m
he ſpirit of meekneſs make known to him
ter of offence, and lay before him or her t
he fact; but if, upon an impartial inqui
ter, we find that we have been miſtaken, o
nformed, and that the perſon is not gu
poſed fault, then the matter is at an end, a
uſt cauſe to be offended: but if not, and
or her to be really guilty of the fault ch
m, but they obſtinately perſiſt in the wro



hearing, then the church muſt view the offender as guilty, and muſt withdraw communion from him. Upon a full conviction of the crime, and the guilty perſon remaining incorrigible, then ſolemn and public admonition is to be adminiſtered by the paſtor or elder in the name of the church; and after waiting a reaſonable time, and no ſigns of repentance appearing, then the guilty perſon is to be rejected, and treated no longer as a member of the church, but as an heathen man and a publican.

But where the offence is ſo private as to admit of no proof by witneſſes, the firſt ſtep only is to be taken; and if the offender cannot be reclaimed, by a private friendly remonſtrance and admonition, the caſe is to be referred to the Omniſcient God, the Judge of all, to the cool reflections of the guilty perſon's own conſcience, and the elucidations of the final day, when the ſecrets of all hearts will be laid open, and judgment will proceed according to the goſpel.—This is the rule, and thus it is to be applied. We only obſerve—

1. That matters of offence muſt be of general concern, not ſo perſonal as to render the perſon complaining incapable of being an impartial witneſs: for the rule is, Take with thee one or two, that in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed; which ſuppoſes the perſon complaining is a witneſs. The action muſt be brought in the name of our Sovereign Lord, the King of his church; and therefore—

2. The juſt matter of offence muſt be, a breach of the laws of his kingdom, any direct immorality, or unchriſtian conduct, and what equally concerns the common cauſe of chriſtianity, which every profeſſing chriſtian is bound to vindicate; and, when proved or made known, becomes matter of offence to every individual profeſſor, equal to the complainer.

3. Now

in the Spirit, was directed to send
of Aſia; which epiſtles begin w
words: *I know thy works*: which in
inſpects the ſtate of his churches, th
individually and in their incorpora
would have his miniſters know alſo
And he commends thoſe who
and irregular teachers among them
orderly members to be of their con
I know thy works, that thou canſ
are evil, and haſt tried them who ſa
and found that they are not, but th
gogue of Satan. So alſo the threate
with which he cloſes theſe epiſtles,
of our text, (He who hath an ear,
Spirit ſaith unto the churches) p
great Head of the church viewed
importance to the well-being of his
tend to the doctrine and diſcipline
carefully attending to the rules d
word of God, by inſpiration of hi

And the Spirit ſaith to every i
them muſt adorn the doctrines of



, or an idolater, or indeed any other vicious perſon, any inheritance in the kingdom of Chriſt and of , they ſhould therefore have no place in his church, h is the kingdom of God among men. Paul tarried onger at Epheſus, that he might more fully inſtruct othy how he ought to behave in the houſe of God, h is the church of the Living God, the pillar and nd of truth, where the truth of the doctrines and the ſpirit of chriſtian diſcipline ſhould be ever maind: for the ungodly lives of profeſſing chriſtians have , and do ſtill, more hurt to the cauſe of true religion, all which the infidel world ever did or can do: for hich they have ſaid or written has been anſwered a ſand times, by ſuch ſound arguments and fair reaſonas the enemies of the Lord Jeſus have not been able inſay or reſiſt. But what can we ſay to thoſe obns which have been drawn from the ungodly lives riſtian profeſſors? Though we think that chriſty ought not to be accountable for the irreligious of its profeſſors, (for the queſtion is not, How do ſian profeſſors live? but, How did Chriſt, and how has aught his followers to live? Without blame before in love.) yet, when this objection is made, it fills e true friends of Chriſt and his cauſe with pain and e, becauſe there is too much room for it. Let him fore who nameth the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt reful to depart from all iniquity, and to adorn the rine of God in all things.—It only remains to ſhow t the Spirit ſaith that the churches of Chriſt may erin this life, and what they may expect in the next.

In this life the Spirit ſaith that the churches which in the faith and fellowſhip of the goſpel ſhall be ed and built up. If they walk by its rules, if they the ſame things recommended therein, they may much of the divine preſence and bleſſing. If you (ſaid

Saviour) will obſerve and do whatſoever I
anded you, lo, I am with you always, even
d of the world. They may in this way ex-
in this life, all the neceſſary ſupplies of the
hrift Jeſus: therefore it was obſerved, that
hurch walked in the fear of the Lord they
nforts of the Holy Ghoſt, and were multipli-
Paul planted, and Apollos watered, God
ſe. Churches founded on this rock—a cre-
ſion, ſupported by a godly life, and a pru-
ine—ſhall riſe ſuperior to every oppoſition;
s of hell ſhall not prevail againſt them; but
row as the corn, they ſhall flouriſh as the
pread forth their branches as the cedars of
ll they ſhall fill the whole earth, and become
Tirzah, comely as Jeruſalem, and terrible
with banners.



that the church has ever been diſtinguiſhed from world of mankind. Our Saviour kept up this diſ- ion, in that laſt and moſt fervent prayer which he le juſt before he entered the laſt and moſt extreme e of his ſuffering, recorded in the 17th of John. I (ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to his Heavenly Father) ifeſted thy name unto the men whom thou gaveſt thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me, and have kept thy word. I pray for them; I pray for the world. And I pray not for them alone, but all thoſe who ſhall believe on me through their word, they may all be one in ſentiment, faith and prac- uniting in me, their head, as thou, Father, art in and I in thee.

It is a high honour, and a diſtinguiſhing privilege, elong to the chriſtian church. They who ſincerely ſeſs their faith in Chriſt, and ſupport that profeſſion a chriſtian life, are intereſted in all the privileges of ſons of God, and in the petition of that divine prayer ch our Saviour addreſſed to his Father a little before yielded up the ghoſt; and every petition in that yer will be completely anſwered in their favour; ch is worth infinitely more than all the world.

It is the duty of all who enjoy the goſpel, and are fully convinced of the truth and importance of the iſtian religion as to influence their temper and con- t, and conform them to the temper and conduct of chriſtian, to join with the church where they live, and blicly profeſs their faith in Chriſt, and their obedience him. It is an honour they owe to him, and a duty y owe to themſelves and families: a duty they owe their God and country; and their neglect cannot cuſed on the principles of reaſon or revelation.

We infer, that thoſe who do belong to the church —der the moſt endearing obligations to adorn the chriſtian

rs. They ſhould be very careful that they
ſerious and conſcientious perſons to come u
eir duty, and give no occaſion to any to excuſ
ect, or to raiſe the objection againſt the chriſt
ion, becauſe its profeſſors are no better than o

gain—We ſhould be careful that we do not r
andidates for admiſſion more than what the Sp
inſpired writings requires. We muſt not b
e what is written. When perſons of ſober liv
erſations, and who in their general deportmen
chriſtian conduct, and appear willing to make
rofeſſion of their faith in Chriſt, and their obe
im, offer themſelves to our communion, w
in my opinion, reject them, but we ought to
to come with us, and to walk in all the ſtatut
nances of the Lord blameleſs. The practice
ing a public relation of chriſtian experiences, n
ſpecial occaſions be for edification; yet it m
owledged that it is of human invention: we
carnt it of Chriſt, nor of the Spirit—we mu
e it a term of communion, or neceſſary to a r
iſſion into the church.

nd may we not hope, that if we, with ca
in the Spirit of meekneſs, watch over one anot
and keep up the true ſpirit of chriſtian diſcipl

hrong; the gates of hell ſhall not prevail; ſhe will and ſhine, and will acquire a much greater ſtate of y, ſimplicity and glory. Glorious things are ſpoken r, and will be accompliſhed in their ſeaſon. Things naturing faſt: obſtacles are removing; there is a of inquiry gone out; a thirſt for knowledge increaſ- a high reliſh for liberty, both civil and religious- ights of man, the juriſdiction of conſcience, and the ples of true liberty, are better underſtood and defined hey have ever been before; and theſe may be neceſ- teps to prepare the public mind to receive the more ful outpouring of the Spirit of God than there ever s been. And we muſt not be impatient: God muſt own work in his own way and time. He who believ- oes not make haſte. Let us all, by our prayers, el and examples, be workers together with God, and adfaſt, foraſmuch as we know that our labour ſhall : in vain.

DISCOURSE

Discourse VII.

...perexcellency of Religion in general.

PROV. xii. 26.

...ighteous is more excellent than his neighbour.

...UR and dignity are objects for which the ... of man has naturally a very ſtrong paſſion:

ich truth we ſhall endeavour to illuſtrate in a few par-
lars wherein all the wiſe and the more judicious of
kind do agree that human excellency does conſiſt;
an honourable deſcent, wiſdom and knowledge, a
le indifference to ſenſual good, courage and fortitude
iind, virtuous freedom, and a benevolent goodneſs of
t; in all which the righteous or the ſincerely good man
lleth all the world beſides, as will plainly appear from
following conſiderations.

An honourable deſcent, or noble birth and extrac-
, is allowed to convey a ſort of hereditary excellency
oſterity, though we cannot ſee the propriety of ſuch
ſtimation, unleſs the hereditary honour inſpires the
endant with a nobleneſs of mind, and fires him with
udable ambition that will elevate him above an un-
thy action, and (being accompanied with an educa-
equal to his noble extraction) begets in him a habit
hinking juſtly, and acting wiſely and virtuouſly. The
s piqued themſelves on their honourable deſcent from
aham; but Jeſus, the wiſe teacher who came from
l, gave them to underſtand that they could have no
m to ſuch hereditary honours except they imitated the
1 and piety of their patriarchal anceſtor. But, al-
ing there were unalienable honours and excellency to
lerived from a high birth and noble extraction, yet
righteous man, i. e. the truly religious man, has the
antage of all his fellow-creatures in point of pedigree,
he is of the blood-royal of heaven, born from above,
, in a religious ſenſe, is ſaid to be born of God, con-
ently of heavenly extract—an heir of God, and a
heir with Jeſus Chriſt, the Eternal Son of God, and
a inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and
ch fadeth not away—an inheritance which cannot be
n from him by any act of confiſcation: no act of at-
der can deprive him of his honour, or prevent his in-
ting all things, ſo long as he ſuſtains his character as

the

ghteous man, which he will in general ſuſtain
gh he may, in ſome inſtances, and under certai
ſtances and temptations, act beſide or below h
nt character, and though he fall, he will riſe a
with the honorary title, he has an excellent ſ
artakes of the divine nature, and is growing u
ater conformity to God his heavenly Father, a
pirits of juſt men made perfect.

Next to noble birth and extraction are the e
s of the mind. Wiſdom and knowledge are
endowments, and what elevate a man's cha
ially when converſant about the beſt things, a
ce the temper and direct the conduct. And he
eous man has the advantage of his unrighteous
; for his knowledge is converſant about the n
ſts, and he contemplates things ſpiritual and

him with an ardent deſire to obtain thoſe efficacious
nces of the Spirit of Holineſs, which may free
rom this body of death, which operates as a law in
iembers, warring againſt the law of his mind; and,
ding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, he is chan-
nto the ſame image, as from glory to glory. And
udying the doctrines, the precepts and the example
: Saviour, he imbibes, the ſame temper and ſpirit,
earns to walk even as he walked.

ie Pſalmiſt boaſted that he knew more than all his
ers—that he knew more than the ancients; and then
:lls us by what means he acquired this ſuperiour
ledge and wiſdom. He ſaid, it was by ſtudying
ıws of his God: upon which a learned writer ob-
s, that it is deſervedly accounted an excellent piece
iowledge to underſtand the laws of the land, or the
of the kingdom, and the will of the ſovereign; but
ı branch of knowledge much more worthy to be cele-
d, to know the ſtatutes of Heaven, the eternal laws
ɾhteouſneſs, the will of the Univerſal Sovereign, and
uſtoms of that country where we hope to live for-
and ever. In this knowledge, which is of the moſt
lent kind, the righteous man excels; and, if he has
ıd, or if the buſineſs and employments of life require
to intermeddle with the natural arts and ſciences, he
he advantage of his unrighteous neighbour; as his
is clear, his ideas ſtrong, and his reaſoning powers
ıtened by divine contemplation. But the excellency
l knowledge conſiſts in its having a good influence
the heart and life. Mere ſpeculation, without a
ary influence, is of no uſe; it does neither good nor
; therefore the knowledge of the righteous man, as it
great, an abiding and good influence upon his tem-
d practice, on this account is of the moſt excellent
he knows to ſome good purpoſe; he is wiſe to ſal-
he knows, and in conſequence of his knowledge

his beſt intereſt; he provides for futurity, and
reaſure ſolid and permanent, where the moth
orrupt, and where the thieves do not break
d ſteal: he prefers the moſt valuable things to
ordid trifles—prefers the ſoul to the body—
he paſſing moments of time; and chooſes the
eedful, which cannot be taken from him. He
wn heart, and how to govern his own paſſions
es, and keeps them within the bounds of pra-
n and faith. A knowledge thus influential is
nportant and excellent than to know the in-
ate, or to fathom the counſels of princes, the
opularity, or the exact balance of nations.
ves the man the advantage of the impious in
and ordinary concerns of this life: it teacheth
r his matters with diſcretion, and maketh the

d of men rabbi, rabbi, is all their care: all which a man, i. e. a good, can and will deſpiſe, when they in competition with his ſoul's intereſt, the honour of , or the good of the public. His thoughts are above painted vanities, and are employed about ſome ſubſtantial good; he ſhakes off theſe incumbrances ſh and ſenſe, and aſpires heaven-ward, ſaying, Whom I in heaven but thee, O God? and there is nothing e earth which I deſire beſide thee.

ıe knowledge of nature is always ſuppoſed to enlarge ıind, and to improve and ennoble the ſoul: therefore hiloſopher who converſes much with the great works od, as manifeſted in the natural world, and who the univerſe into his contemplative mind, learns to ſe riches and the pageantry of princes, and think diminutively of a few acres of land, of a ſtately houſe, being known and admired by a few ſtaring, ſcram- fellow-mortals who happen to live on the ſame of earth with himſelf. How much more then will arge the mind, and ennoble the ſoul, to contemplate ıuthor of nature, the great Lord and ſupport of the rſe, all of whoſe perfections are infinite! how muſt ılimate the immortal ſpirit, to contemplate heaven, nagnificent ſeat of the extenſive empire of the great ah! enough, one would think, to prevent an undue ument to carnal and earthly things; eſpecially when n do it with the conſciouſneſs that this ſeat of bliſs. own immortal home. When once raiſed on the ı of faith and holy contemplation, we can obtain naintain juſt apprehenſions of the great and bleſſed the beauty and glory of the incarnate Redeemer, y anticipation enter into his joy, it muſt elevate and ndize the human ſoul to that degree that this ter- orld and all which is in it will, as it were, vaniſh ſappear, as the twinkling ſtars retire before the

9. And the righteous, i. e. the good man, will be

der theſe elevating contemplations, to look
a pious indifference upon thoſe ſublunary
n are the firſt objects of the unrighteous man's
the ſplendour of a court, all the pomp of the
lded amuſements of the ſenſualiſt, and the gew-
hion and ceremony, can no more dazzle his
feeble luſtre of the glow-worm will that of the
he ſoars above the clouds, and dwells among
s.

teous man is not concerned about the punc-
ver or honour, and cares not, with reſpect to
o ſhall be preferred to ſuch a poſt of honour
who ſhall obtain ſuch a fortune, or ſit higheſt
in the ſynagogue; his chief concern is, to
laker, to honour his Saviour, and ſecure his
he heavenly Canaan, and to walk worthy of

d to and fro, like a ſhip in the boiſterous ocean with-ballaſt, with every wind, or the caprice of fortune, are ſome how or other affected with all the motions is fluctuating ſtate of mortal things; for they are the troubled ſea, which cannot reſt. The righteous t afraid of evil tidings; for his heart is fixed, truſting e Lord: but the wicked are alarmed at every threaten-aſpect of Providence, and tremble at the ſhaking of lf; for the wicked flee when none purſue, but the eous are as bold as a lion.

r. We have to obſerve, in the next place, that the eous is more excellent than his unrighteous neigh-, in true magnanimity, and genuine courage. Hero-has always been celebrated as ſomething noble and llent, and thoſe who have bravely achieved great and e actions have had their names enrolled among the t, and tranſmitted down to poſterity with honour renown. And there is nothing which inſpires a man ſuch a ſpirit of fortitude, and true courage, as re-n. An inward conſciouſneſs that we are in favour the great Lord of all, and that we have in the main oved ourſelves to the Searcher of hearts, and the ctor of the events of providence, muſt arm the ſoul magnanimity and courage, which no danger can come. Hence ſaid the heroic Apoſtle, armed with religious fortitude, and in full view of bonds, im-nments and martyrdom, None of theſe things move nor count I my life dear to me, ſo that I might finiſh life with joy, and the miniſtry which I have received he Lord to fulfill it.

rue fortitude and magnanimity of ſpirit appears ra-in ſuffering hard things, than in achieving great gs. Many great cowards would enterpriſe great gs, were it not for the danger that attends; but at ſight of danger their ſpirits recoil, and their courage fails:

ith and piety can face any danger, when duty
anfully ſurmount difficulties which lie in the
with this ſpiritual armour, the feebleſt of the
, and the moſt delicate of the fair ſex, have
nders which have ſurpriſed and aſtoniſhed an
d—have performed acts of true heroiſm which
ed if not excelled any which have been per-
the moſt renowned conquerors. Let the
uce, if they can, ſuch inſtances of firmneſs and
the chriſtian martyrs have ſhewn—inſtances
hey not only amazed but converted their
ecutors. They endured ſuch cruelties and
cannot be mentioned without filling every
aft with horror, with patience, meekneſs and
achieved great things, as well as ſuffered
: they ſubdued kingdoms, put to flight inſ-
quenched the violence of fire, ſtopped the

:n, and the feebleſt of women, and the moſt deli-
f their ſex, that they might obtain a better reſur-
ı. Nor did they wantonly throw away their lives,
e them up from unavoidable neceſſity or ſtoic in-
lity, but voluntarily fell a ſacrifice in the cauſe of
ınd goodneſs. They might have eſcaped all theſe
:s and deaths by uttering a few blaſphemous words,
betraying the cauſe they were embarked in, and
ıying the Lord who bought them; but they wiſely
I it better to ſuffer theſe momentary pains, than to
their title to eternal life, to diſpleaſe their God and
ır, and to expoſe themſelves to future eternal pu-
:nt. Ancient Rome and Greece may boaſt of their
and conquerors, but they fall as much ſhort of the
an martyrs in point of true courage and magnani-
as the madmen of Bedlam do of them. What if
nd then there has been one in thoſe nations who has
juſtly celebrated for his heroiſm—one in a century
ıas been ſo far ſtimulated with a deſire of glory,
nimated with a ſecret hope of receiving ſome un-
reward in a future world (of which he had no
as to ſacrifice his life to the good of his coun-
what are theſe to an almoſt infinite number, who, in
uſe of truth and goodneſs, have not counted their
lear to them, but quietly reſigned liberty, property,
tion, and life itſelf, that they might hold faſt the
ſion of their faith without wavering, and maintain
idelity to their great Lord and Maſter.

taiply there is nothing which can fortify the mind,
ſpire it with true and manly courage, when real
r threatens, like a fixed confidence in God, and a
rounded hope of eternal bleſſedneſs. This the good
lone has: religion, therefore, renders him more
nt than his neighbour who is deſtitute of the prin-
of religion, the only ſure baſis of true heroiſm.

V. The

V. The righteous man excels the wicked as much i freedom as he does in fortitude, and therefore is mor excellent. Freedom is the idol of human nature—claime as the birth-right of all, and the boaſt of an *American*— but the property only of the good man, and poſſeſſed b him. It is what all purſue; but none obtain it excep the ſincerely good man. He who uniformly acts volun tarily upon the principles of enlightened reaſon, and ap proves himſelf to his God and his own conſcience, is a freeman. The fetters of ſtate, the chains of ceremony, the tyranny of cuſtom, the falſe painting of intereſt, and the impetuoſity of the paſſions, deprive a very great part of mankind of the happineſs of freedom: and even the good man, while he is connected with the world, cannot get quite rid of theſe ſhackles and bonds; though he is not conformed to the world, but is transformed by the renewing of the mind, and practically approves of that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. And, beſides theſe enſigns of ſlavery, the wicked man ſuffers a far more ſhameful bondage; he ſuffers violence from his own irregular paſſions and appetites: as, for inſtance, the paſſionate man is, before he is aware of it, tranſported beyond the bounds of reaſon and decency, and is ſome times forced on by the impetuoſity of his angry paſſions into ſuch extremes, that on cool reflection he is aſhamed of his raſhneſs, and is ready to cry out, with the Pſalmiſt, So fooliſh was I, and ignorant, I was a beaſt before thee: and, though he ſeverely condemns himſelf for his folly, yet on a like occaſion he gives a looſe to the ſame unruly paſſions, and is puſhed on to the ſame extremes; like the lawleſs waves of the ſea, which foam and rave till they laſh the ſhore. So the covetous man is a drudge to Mammon; he toils all day, and his reſt is diſturbed at night with plans and ſchemes how to get wealth, and treaſure up gold; ſo that he has not the reſpite of his African ſlave, who, when he has done his work, and

performed

rmed his daily taſk, repoſes himſelf on his hard
r, and ſleeps without anxiety or care. The ambi-
he fawns and flatters, ſtoops to thoſe he hates,
s his own inclinations, and does even violence to
wn feelings, in order that he may riſe by favour.
raits the will of the great, and watches the motions
s eye, with as much ſubmiſſion as the tameſt ſlave
he eye of his maſter. The drunkard, too, ſuffers
lf not only to be deprived of his freedom, but of his
n and his wealth, and conſents to act on a level
or rather below, the beaſts who periſh: and,
h when he firſt awakes from his cups, having ſlept
ie frolic humour, and finds that the whole animal
has ſuffered by the exceſs, he condemns himſelf,
orms new reſolutions that he will forſake his cup
is companions in vice; yet, almoſt as ſoon as the
of the liquor are out of his head, and his con-
e is a little pacified with promiſes of reformation,
is appetite has recovered its former taſte, he, on the
ıvitation from thoſe whom he calls his friends, goes
them, as the ox goeth to the ſlaughter, and acts
ıgain the ſordid ſcene. The luxurious and the ſen-
vill talk much of health and long life—will praiſe
rance and ſobriety, and will reſolve upon a refor-
n, and that for the future they will keep within the
ls of moderation; but the ſight of a well-ſpread ta-
ſhes all their reſolutions, and they are borne away
e ſtrength of their appetites beyond the bounds of
n and reaſon, and feed as freely as if they were fat-
themſelves for the day of ſlaughter. And when
ind an opportunity to gratify their unclean deſires,
ıſcivious inclinations, (which by intemperance grow
ıous) they purſue the object of thier fleſhly luſts, till
ſtrike through their liver; as a bird haſteth to the
and knows not that it is for his life.

ſe high claimers of freedom are the veriеſt
while they promiſe themſelves freedom, they
rants of corruption: for of whom a man is
f the ſame is he brought into bondage. But
an is in a good meaſure free. He is indeed
of God, and the diſciple of Chriſt. Theſe
ſaid he had made free—and thoſe whom the
ſhall make free, they are free indeed. It is
e religion of the goſpel, which reſtores true
the ſoul; it is divine grace which conquers
ce of the paſſions, and creates peace within;
grace which gives us the command and the
on of ourſelves; it is divine grace which
ſhly luſts, purifies from all iniquity, and in-
a laudable ambition to excel in goodneſs.
ion gets a ſeat in the heart, it corrects the

but of tolerable capacity, open their eyes, or allow reason and common ſenſe to ſpeak, they could not but ſee, nay, feel, the amiable and excellent form of virtue and godlineſs—the beauty and majeſty of religion—as what at once adorns human nature, diffuſes a ſanctity through the whole conſtitution, and elevates to a near alliance with angels. And at the ſame time they muſt diſcover the ugly deformity of vice and wickedneſs, and that the heart which is under the influence of vicious principles is a cage of unclean birds, and the habitation of foul ſpirits, who enter and dwell there, and the laſt end muſt be worſe than the firſt.

VII. Another thing in which the righteous excel the unrighteous, and which completes the character of the righteous man, is, a truly *benevolent and benign ſpirit.* Nothing can be a more evident mark of a baſe and ignoble mind, than confining our benevolence to the ſmall circle of our friends and relatives. The righteous man embraces the whole family of mankind within his benevolent wiſh. As a man, he pities all in diſtreſs, and relieves all within his reach; and if he could have his wiſh, there would not be pain and poverty in the world: and, where his alms deeds fail, and his acts of kindneſs cannot relieve, he ſupplies their impotency with his counſel and his prayers: for the righteous man is gracious and full of compaſſion, he ſheweth favour, and lendeth; and by opening the heart to the exerciſe of ſuch extenſive benevolence, he acquires a nobleneſs of mind, an habit of greatneſs and excellency, beyond what is poſſible to be obtained while a ſelfiſh and contracted ſpirit is indulged. And, beſides, it is a godlike temper, and a mark of the children of God, who is the bounteous Father of angels and men, and who is ever diffuſing his benevolence through his mighty empire, and liberally conferring his bounties on the members of his numerous family. Therefore our Saviour urged his followers to univerſal benevolence, not excluding their

moſt

moſt ſpiteful enemies, from this weighty conſideration—that they might be the children of their Father who is in heaven, for he maketh his ſun to riſe and ſhine on the evil and the good, and ſendeth his rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt.

IMPROVEMENT.

I think we may infer the ſad and fatal miſtake which a great part of the world make about true excellency; as they ſeem to place it in mean and ſordid things, merely ſenſual, nay, in vicious things, in an indulged appetite, lawleſs paſſions, in a freedom from the reſtraints of reaſon and religion, and in being above the ſacred rules of virtue, and the dictates of a well-informed and tender conſcience. Poor, miſtaken mortals! they muſt have miſtaken the body for the ſoul, an empty ſound for ſolid good, a ſhadow for the ſubſtance, earth for heaven, and their belly for their God, and their ſhame for their glory.

If the mind is the man, if to be like God is the perfection of our nature, if heaven is the home of holy ſouls, and the only ſtate of future happineſs; then the ſenſual and vicious man, who deſpiſes the reſtraints of virtue, reaſon and religion, and ſuffers his appetites and paſſions to give law to his action, and direct his conduct, is not only miſtaken in a capital point, but is ruining himſelf, and is doing what he can to diſturb ſociety and deſtroy the world; and is therefore an enemy to himſelf, to his God, and to his fellow-men, and is in combination with infernal ſpirits, and muſt, on the principles of fair reaſon, expect to ſhare with them in that puniſhment originally prepared for the fallen angels.

What madneſs and folly are thoſe guilty of who neglect or contemn religion, and deſpiſe and ſcoff at the righteous! What can ſuch ſcoffers mean! would they *baniſh* religion out of the world, and make her retire aſha-

ſhamed

med into oblivion! Alas! what a world would this be, were that the caſe! This earth would be but another hell, without the righteous, and the happy reſtraints of religion. Without the divine and ſacred guard of the religion of the goſpel, tumults, ſedition, anarchy, rapine, murders, ſecret malice, open fraud, fierce revenge, in ſhort, every evil, every enemy, and every calamity, would reign without controul and without bounds; order would forſake the earth, the ſacred boundaries of property and conſcience (if conſcience there was) would be broken up, and the whole world would become miſerable. It is only the ſmall remains of the religion of Jeſus, that ſuper-excellent thing, which keeps the world in any tolerable order and condition.

What an enemy, then, muſt the vicious man be to his God, to his country, to the Saviour, to himſelf, and to mankind in general! How does he oppoſe the benevolent Jeſus, who came to ſave and bleſs the world with peace, and truth, and grace; to atone for ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf, to regenerate the human heart, and to ſubdue the malignant paſſions of our fallen nature, to ſanctify the ſinner by the influences of his Spirit co-operating with the truths of his goſpel, and thereby to raiſe him to the nobleſt forms of the divine life; and in fine by the ſame grace to animate him in the way of well-doing to ſeek for glory, honour and immortality, until he ſhall obtain eternal life, and be made meet to enter upon the inheritance of the ſaints in light!

Discourse VIII.

Family Religion and Prayer.

EPH. vi. 18.

ways with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,
ching thereunto with all perseverance and supplica-
ll saints.

under ſome diſtreſſing calamity, but conſtantly pray for yourſelves and families, the church of God, and the world of mankind, and let the ſuffering ſaints have a particular and an affectionate part in your pious addreſſes, that they may be ſupported under thoſe cruel perſecutions, and that intolerable weight of general odium, which their amiable characters have drawn upon them from an ignorant and an ungrateful world. Thus our text enjoins upon us all kinds of prayer, with conſtancy and perſeverance therein; but more eſpecially ſocial or family prayer. The exhortation of the Apoſtle is addreſſed to heads of families; therefore in the following diſcourſe we ſhall have reference chiefly to this kind of prayer, as a leading article in family religion, and which is both introductory to, and has a happy influence upon, every other duty which heads of families are bound to diſcharge towards their families.

Family-prayer is a duty ſo natural, ſo well ſupported from Scripture, and ſo admirably adapted to ſupport the honour and promote the domeſtic happineſs of a well-ordered family, that little need be ſaid in its defence; but, for the ſake of the riſing generation (for whoſe benefit this little work is principally deſigned) we ſhall offer a few things in ſupport of the duty, and to enforce the practice:—in doing which we ſhall obſerve the following order:

I. We ſhall offer a few plain and ſerious arguments to prove that family-prayer is a duty incumbent on all heads of families.

II. Enforce the practice from ſeveral weighty and intereſting conſiderations.

III. We ſhall anſwer the moſt conſiderable objections which have been or may be formed againſt the practice.

Give ſome directions how it ſhould be performed.

I. The

rguments which we ſhall make uſe of in ſup-
duty ſhall be drawn from reaſon, Scripture
le.

e and reaſon require that we ſocially and re-
knowledge that being on whom we depend for
ath and all things, and from whom we receive
t ſupplies of life. I ſhall take it for granted
om I mean to addreſs in this eſſay believe that
God who governs the world, and who, in
ſtrations of his providential government, be-
fits, and inflicts evils. And we aſk, Ought
d to be religiouſly acknowledged in that fa-
he beſtows his bleſſings, and inflicts his cor-
And in what more decent, rational or proper
hat religious acknowledgment be expreſſed,
e maſter or principal head of that family to

vering down family bleſſings, and daily ſurrounding with domeſtic enjoyments? Should not that God is the Creator of the ends of the earth, your Creator, your families', your preſerver and theirs, your bene-or and theirs, have your daily joint homage, worſhip praiſe paid him on the domeſtic altar of your family? ry argument which operates in favour of public wor- operates equally in favour of family-prayer, of ſocial domeſtic worſhip; for every family is a ſingle part of whole public, is but a diſtinct member of the whole ily of mankind; therefore, if joint ſocial worſhip is onable any where, it muſt be reaſonable in families.

I. We paſs to examine the arguments drawn from pture which enjoin and enforce this duty.

rayer is a piece of natural religion—what the light ature teaches, and what the common conſent of man- has put beyond all doubt; therefore we cannot rea- bly expect to find many expreſs precepts for it in pture, for it is not the buſineſs of divine revelation to h natural religion; though the holy Scriptures are wholly ſilent on this ſubject: in our text the duty learly implied, if not particularly expreſſed. The oſtle in our context is giving advice to heads of fami- exhorting them to the duties which are incumbent on n as ſuch; and he ſays, Ye fathers, provoke not your dren to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and onition of the Lord; and then adds, And ye maſters, the ſame thing unto your ſervants; i. e. give them a gious education; and that maſters or heads of fami- may do this, they muſt pray in their families con- ly, with all prayer and ſupplication in the Spirit: ſo the Apoſtle makes the faithful diſcharge of this du- an eſſential part or branch of that religious education. ich heads of families are bound to give unto their dren and ſervants.

In

you muſt pray with ſervour
children and ſervants, in your
cular buſineſs, company or di
your morning and evening ſac
continual burnt offering. If t
the context on perſonal religi
then ſaid, Praying always wi
natural enough to underſtand
ſecret prayer; or if he had bee
ſhip, and the duties of the ſanct
rally led us to ſuppoſe that h
prayers, in the ſynagogue, or
but, as he had been profeſſedly
ties and family religion, and c
inſtructions on that ſubject wit
with all prayer and ſupplication
not ſuppoſe him to exclude fam
of his pathetic exhortation; but
ed to recommend and enjoin it
family religion and a pious ec
take in the ſcope and deſign of
low our text fully to imply, and
of family prayer; that heads of
a neceſſary part of that religious

ives ſimilar advice to heads of families, particularly
aſters, and ſays, Give unto your ſervants that which
t and equal, and continue in prayer: q. d. in the
ating of your families you muſt be careful to with-
nothing from them which is their due, or any of
juſt rights and privileges which they may naturally
t as members of your family; therefore you muſt
nue in the ſerious diſcharge of family prayer, from
h domeſtic ſervice not the leaſt ſervant is to be exclu-
. And, as the Apoſtle mentions conſtant prayer,
h the maſters of families muſt continue in, we can-
ſuppoſe him to mean any other than family prayer;
re not excluſive of that; therefore that he expreſsly
ns this as a duty which heads of families are con-
ly and conſcientiouſly to diſcharge. And, to cloſe
argument, which is drawn from expreſs texts of Scrip-
in favour of family prayer, we ſhall mention that in
ter, iii. 7, where the Apoſtle exhorts huſbands and
s to live peaceably together, that their prayers might
be hindered. What prayers can we ſuppoſe the
ſtle had reference to? Certainly family prayer, in
h huſband and wife are to join, and which would be
ructed by domeſtic jars, eſpecially between the huſ-
d and the wife. Here we ſee three texts of Scripture
hich family prayer is fully and fairly implied and
ined, almoſt as expreſſly as if it had been ſaid, Pa-
s and heads of families, you muſt frequently call
families together, and ſee that none of your children
ſervants are abſent, and pray with them, fervently,
ſtantly and perſeveringly, if you would ſucceed in
religious education of them, and would not deprive
n of any of the natural rights and privileges of your
ily. And there are ſeveral other paſſages which
be collected from the ſacred Scriptures in which the
y is fairly implied, if not expreſsly enjoined. To theſe
be ſubjoined another argument, from the example

of

rendered, perfect among his cn
it is added, he walked with G
ceive how he could be a juſt m
among his family, and walk
lected family prayer: but it i
when his wife, his ſons and his
of the ark, he built an altar, a
thereon, and that the Lord ſm
bleſſed Noah and his ſons, or fa
and multiply, and replenish the
ſaid, that he would command h
hold after him, and they ſhould
This implied at leaſt that he w
and the moſt effectual care th
in his family: and we cannot
ſuppoſe that he devoutly and ſte
and we find that, whenever h
firſt thing he did after pitchin
domeſtic altar, on which was c
family. Of Job it is ſaid, that
children, who he feared in the
ſinned againſt the Lord: and

without family prayer? We think not: but while the idolaters around him were offering daily ſacrifice to their ſenſeleſs deities, he and his houſe would jointly ſerve the Living Jehovah. Devout Daniel would not omit ſo important a branch of natural religion as family prayer, though he expoſed himſelf thereby to be torn to pieces by hungry lions; therefore it is recorded, that he prayed in his houſe (or with his family, as it may be read) though according to the wicked edict every one who did ſo was to be thrown into the den of lions. It ſeems that he had ſtated hours or ſeaſons for his family devotions, and in that corrupt and dangerous age he was not ſatisfied with the morning and evening ſacrifice, but three times in a day he prayed in or with his houſehold: notwithſtanding the impious and horrid edict, he went into his houſe, and, kneeling down, prayed as before, with his face towards Jeruſalem, according to the cuſtom of the devout Jews: and it is obſerved that the windows of his houſe were open, which plainly ſhews that it was not ſecret prayer, for then he would not have entered into his chamber or common hall, but into his cloſet, and ſhut not only his windows but his door, and prayed ſecretly to his Father who ſeeth in ſecret, and would have rewarded him openly. David, the man after God's own heart, was eminently a man of prayer. When therefore he had worſhipped God publicly in the ſanctuary, where he delighted to have his feet planted, he returned to bleſs his houſe, i. e. to diſcharge the duty of a maſter of his family, to lead in acts of domeſtic worſhip, and in a ſocial manner to implore a divine bleſſing on his houſehold, and, as the head and prieſt of the family, to bleſs them in the name of the Lord.

Thus we have the example of the moſt eminent ſaints the Old Teſtament, under a much leſs enlightened diſpenſation than we enjoy. But we have much greater and far more illuſtrious examples in the New, eſpecially

family. In one place it is ſaid, t
in a certain place with his diſc
ſocial addreſs, one of them ſaid u
to pray, as John taught his diſcip
requeſt, he gave them that exce
family prayer which we have re
Matthew. And again we read o
his diſciples; i. e. there was no
but his ſtated followers, who for
But we need not multiply inſta
adduced he has ſet us the exampl
of him—Look on me, and go and

We might collect examples fro
apoſtles, but, omitting theſe, we
the more ſober and ſagacious he
may have as great weight with ſ
as any we have mentioned. An
always had their *lares* and their
Gods, to whom they paid family
were thoſe images of Laban's whic
ſtole, from a ſuperſtitious regar
tracted for them, and for the great
paid them in her father's houſe.



to expect that in the final day they will rise up against them in judgment, and condemn them, as our Saviour said the men of Nineveh would against those of that generation with whom he was then conversant. Will they call themselves christians, the servants and worshippers of the only Living and True God, who neglect to pay an act of religious worship and homage to the everlasting Jehovah, which the stupid heathen devoutly pay to their penates, their household images! We close this argument with that passage of Scripture which we have recorded Jer. x. 25: "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen, who know thee not, and upon the families who call not on thy name:" and we will leave it to every man's conscience to say whether this passage does not strongly imply, that every family which is not heathen will call upon the name of the Lord, or, in other words, maintain family religion and worship; or whether the neglect of family prayer does not expose that family to the divine displeasure.

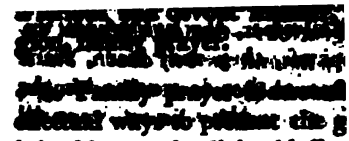
II. We are in the next place to enforce the practice, from several weighty considerations: and all heads of families should consider, that the serious, devout and conscientious practice of family prayer is one of the most direct and effectual ways to procure the greatest good for their families, and to prevent the greatest evil.

1. It is the most direct, easy and effectual way to teach their children and servants the knowledge and practice of true religion. That this knowledge and practice is necessary to true happiness, and is productive of the greatest good to families as well as to individuals, and preventive of the greatest domestic evil, we shall take for granted. And what more easy, natural and effectual [illegible] there be taken to promote the knowledge and [illegible] of true religion in a family, than the serious, con[illegible]d devout performance of family prayer? While [illegible] of a family is, in their name, addressing himself

to

a being of divine perfections, poſſeſſed of wiſ-
r, holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs, mercy, truth and
, he leads his children and ſervants into right
ons of him; and thus he does, as it were by
legrees, initiate them into the true knowledge
efore, it may be, they are capable of forming
nd diſtinct ideas on any complex ſubject. Hence
ppoſe, that we often hear our little ones, with
r ſtammering tongue, aſk ſurpriſing queſtions
and Chriſt, about heaven and hell—queſtions
y have formed out of thoſe fragments of
which have been excited by the daily prayers
y have heard ſo conſtantly and devoutly ad-
God in the name of Chriſt, imploring his fa-
eliverance from hell, and the beſtowment of
and happineſs in heaven.

divine goodneſs and thoſe natural obligations they
under to live to that God by whom they live and
ve and have their being. And, as the obligations to
ural gratitude are perhaps the firſt which we feel, ſo
en our children and ſervants hear us preſent our ad-
ſſes in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as the Al-
hty and All-gracious Redeemer, through whom we
e for pardon and happineſs, they may learn, from
ir very childhood, to venerate that dear and adorable
ne, and may ground a hope, or place a confidence, in
, as in one able and willing to ſave, long before they
digeſt a definition of ſaving faith, or diſtinguiſh the
racter which it bears, or the place it occupies, in the
pel ſcheme of ſalvation. So, when they hear us pray
the afflicted and diſtreſſed, it may teach them to prac-
ſympathy and compaſſion for the ſons of ſorrow,
the children of wo; and when they hear us
reſs the Father of the univerſe for the whole family
mankind, it may inſpire them with ſentiments of uni-
ſal benevolence and charity, which makes no inconſi-
able part of that religion which is from above, and is
pure, and then peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be entreated,
of love and good fruits. The ſame advantage may be
ived from every branch of a devout, pertinent family
yer, to every member of the family; therefore it may
the moſt direct, eaſy and effectual way to procure for,
ſecure to, our families the greateſt good. And this
ſideration muſt have weight with every conſcientious
ſter of a family, who is bound, both by the laws of
d and nature, to do all he can, to take the moſt direct,
and effectual meaſures, to inſtruct his children and
ants in the knowledge of God, and the practice of
religion; eſpecially, conſidering that they are come
o the world under the power of corrupt and vitiated
ures; and, as far as we have been inſtrumental of
ir exiſtence, ſo far we have been inſtrumental of con-



is in this way the divine bleſſing
greateſt preſervative from evil
the moſt natural, eaſy and eff
children and ſervants the knowl
religion, then it is the moſt dire
we can take to procure for then
the curſe of the Lord is in the
he bleſſeth the habitation of th
tion which is bleſſed is under a d
while a wicked and prayerleſs fa
to the judgments of God. Can
mily protection, without we jo
rationally expect that God will
which we have, without we reli
and all we have to his care, anc
protecting wing? The Scriptur
thoſe families who call not upo
having his fury poured out up
ſoul of you will ſay. There is

peſtilence which waſteth at noon day does not come nigh us, though we riſe from our beds, and purſue our buſineſs or our pleaſures, without praying in our families. We are in health and outward proſperity, and ſee no danger.—It may be ſo; but this only proves that God is good, and has drawn out his patience to long-ſuffering—that he is waiting to be gracious—that he does not execute his judgments ſpeedily againſt an evil deed: but if you take encouragement from thence to continue in the neglect of ſo plain a piece of natural religion, you will but verify the obſervation of the Wiſe King, that therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully ſet in them to do wickedly. And though God ſhould not immediately bleſs your families, but wait, that he might be gracious, and ſee if you will not repent and reform, and then he will turn away from the fierceneſs of his anger, that you periſh not; yet if you ſhould continue to abuſe his patience and long-ſuffering, and perſiſt in the neglect of this your duty, you muſt expect that the day of his recompence will come; and what will you do in the day thereof! for God will turn the wicked into hell, and all the families (though there were ſo many as to compoſe whole nations) who ſo forget him as not to call upon his name.

Another conſideration, which will add ſome weight to this argument, is, that it will be greatly for the ſpiritual advantage of your families. Here we will appeal to fathers or maſters of families, to ſay whether they do not ſtand in daily need of thoſe ſpiritual helps and advantages which the ſerious and conſcientious diſcharge of this duty is calculated to afford; or whether theſe adorations of the Divine Majeſty, theſe humble confeſſions of [illegible] and theſe earneſt ſupplications for pardon, and grace [illegible] have not a natural tendency to beget a kind of [illegible] fear of God, an inward remorſe for ſin, and an deſire of pardon, grace and holineſs. And may we

ſe that the daily mentioning of theſe things
us exerciſes will improve the mind in prac-
dge, and give us a more impreſſive ſenſe
hings? Beſides, a perſon who conſcientiouſly
family cannot be ſuppoſed to perform this
t *thought*, though it ſhould be in ever ſo for-
er: and, if he thinks, his thoughts muſt im-
nd, and that improvement will diffuſe a hap-
over the whole family. And the ſerious and
rformance of this duty will reſtrain from
evil practices. For inſtance, a maſter of a
makes conſcience of praying in and with
vill not be unneceſſarily abſent at the hour of
r; he will not be found at public houſes,
aming table, when he ſhould be on his
ng up the ſacrifice of the family. Com-
y, too, will reſtrain thoſe who are the

ble of being taught the fear and love of God by your inſtructions; and then aſk yourſelves whether you have any right to deprive thoſe little dependents of the privilege or advantage they may have of learning religion from your daily reading the word of God to them, and praying with and for them. Can you deprive them of this privilege, which is connected with their being placed under your care? or how can you anſwer ſuch neglect to them—to their Heavenly Father? or how will you ſupport the charge in the final day, if that ſhould be made on you, that they learnt to neglect religion from your example in your family, where even the external form of it was not to be found?

III. In the laſt place we propoſed to anſwer an objection or two againſt the practice of this duty: and we know but two which can be made. The firſt is, the want of capacity. To this may be replied, Where there is not a heart wanting, this objection will not long remain in force; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will ſpeak. If you want not a diſpoſition, you will not long complain that you have not ability; for the heart of a good man will teach his mouth wiſdom, and will add knowledge to his lips. If the mind is properly impreſſed with a ſenſe of eternal things, and you are made really to feel your ſpiritual wants, and your dependence upon God, you will ſoon find words to expreſs that ſenſe you have of divine things, and thoſe wants which you feel. It requires but a very ſmall capacity to expreſs in a decent manner your wants, and to acknowledge your dependence upon God, and your obligations to him; and the plaineſt and moſt natural expreſſion in prayer is all which is required. The moſt natural expreſſions of your feelings, ſentiments and deſires, if ſincere, are much more eloquent and acceptable to God than the moſt elegant and pompous language, and are more pertinent and uſeful in ordinary families. And, after all, if you cannot

pray

extempore, or without a ſtudied form,
uſe of ſome eaſy, plain and ſhort form
omebody elſe, which you may get by h
t *memoriter*, or from memory, in a ſerious
and devout manner:* ſo that this objecti
force, or any ſufficient reaſon why this du
glected any longer.

e other objection is, the want of confidenc
ractice that which has been too long, and
ly, neglected. But if you are convinced
duty to pray in your families, and you n
ce of duty, this objection will not long have
ht with you to prevent it. That baſhfuln
not ſuffer you to do your duty is ſinful,
e indulged; for the longer it is indulged,
will be enſlaved by it: therefore this objecti
r excite you to the practice of the duty in

2. Your prayers ſhould be pertinent. In your adorations you ſhould mention with reverence the natural and moral perfections of God. In your petitions, you muſt particularly expreſs the grounds of your hope—the free mercy of God, the merits and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt, and the gracious promiſes in the word of God. In your confeſſions for ſin, you ſhould mention and lament the corruption of our nature, as well as the actual tranſgreſſions of life; ſo in your thankſgivings you muſt expreſs your thankfulneſs to God for his boundleſs goodneſs and free mercy, and eſpecially for that unſpeakable gift, Jeſus Chriſt, to a loſt and guilty world, and for all the gifts of nature, providence and grace, which we and all mankind derive from God through him. You ſhould particularly mention the favours and bleſſings, both perſonal and domeſtic, you enjoy as a family. By theſe pertinent expreſſions, in the various parts of prayer, you will, by little and little, form the young and tender minds of your children and ſervants to right apprehenſions of God, of Jeſus Chriſt, and themſelves, and of the way and method of ſalvation. Such prayers have a tendency to impreſs their minds with a ſenſe of their obligations to God, and their dependence upon him, for life, breath, and all things.

3. Your family prayers ſhould be ſhort. If they ſhould be drawn out to an undue length, they will become burdenſome to youth and children, whoſe minds are too volatile to be kept long fixed to any ſubject. To the weak we are to become as weak. But then you are not to be ſo ſhort as to omit any eſſential part of prayer, or not to [illegible] urſelf time to be a little particular: as, for in- you ſhould frequently, if not conſtantly, (be- ing in general for the temporal and ſpiritual of your family) pray for civil rulers; that will in loyalty and ſubjection to government, and re- ſpect for our political fathers: you muſt pray

for

iniſters of the goſpel; that will teach them re
the miniſters of Chriſt, and to eſteem them
or their works' ſake: and for the church o
hich he hath redeemed with his own blood; this
n them to ſeek her intereſt, and to wiſh and pray
eace and proſperity. You ſhould pray for the
ſick and diſtreſſed; this will teach your family
n, benevolence and charity. In one word, you
ay in particular for your children, ſervants, and
nber of your family; for, when they hear them-
ntioned, it will natually enkindle in their boſoms
ion, affection and eſteem for you, and a ſerious
or themſelves, which may have a good, yea, a
fluence on their minds, and become a ſource of
omfort to you.

r family prayers ſhould be ſeaſonable—in the

lies, who conſcientiouſly wiſh to do their duty, will live in the neglect of it, but, reviewing the duty of family prayer in the light in which we have held it up, will immediately enter upon the practice, if neglected before. And, that this ſo important a duty ſhould not dwindle into ſpiritleſs formality, you muſt labour, above all things, after the true ſpirit of prayer; that you may realize your wants, that you may feel your need of divine help. Let your expreſſions be ſerious, weighty and fervent, as becomes an act of homage paid to the Ever-living Jehovah.

And now may the God of the families of all the earth ſhed down upon you and your families the bleſſings both of his grace and providence, and make you and your families the bleſſed of the Lord, while he pours out his fury on thoſe families who call not upon his name.

A Morning or Evening Prayer *for a Family.*

O THOU moſt Great and Glorious God! we, thy rational and dependent creatures, beg leave to addreſs thee, as the only Living and True God—who heareth prayer, to whom all fleſh ſhould come. To thee therefore we come, in the name of Jeſus our great high prieſt, to offer up to thee our morning [or evening] ſacrifice upon this domeſtic altar; as thou art the ſupport of univerſal nature, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

But we have to own, in thy preſence, that we have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee; in many things we have offended, and in all things we have come ſhort: but thou art the Lord God, merciful and gracious, ſeated on a throne of grace, and a mercy ſeat, diſpenſing pardons to true penitents. O grant us repentance unto life, that

obtain the remiſſion of ſin, accord
f thy grace; and by the ſanctifying i
od Spirit deliver us from the power,
e guilt and puniſhment, of ſin, and re
y thy grace.

ou God of our lives, give us grace th
this world of ſenſe, a life of faith and
and, while we paſs this vale of tears, m
n of this world's goods as we may uſe
honour of God, for the good of ſocie
al happineſs.

we realize the ſhortneſs of time; the
orldly good; and feel the importance
have at all times in ſuch a manner,
ſummoned away ever ſo ſuddenly, dea

ſs, we beſeech thee, our family, that both we who
e over it, and they who belong to it, may belong
: houſehold of faith, and be bleſſed in him in whom
milies of the earth are bleſſed.

ſt Merciful Father, we thank thee for all thy good-
which thou haſt manifeſted to us, or conferred upon
hole human race. We thank thee for the ineſtima-
ivilege we enjoy, in having free acceſs to the throne
ace through a Mediator, for the ample proviſion
haſt made for the forgiveneſs of our daily ſins, and
e future ſupplies of grace which we may need while
ſs this vale of tears.

: particularly thank thee for the ſalvations of the
or night] paſt, and humbly commit ourſelves to
are of thy kind providence. Protect us from all
hrough the day, [or night] and bring us ſafe to
er morning, [or evening] when we may meet again
: throne of grace to preſent our morning [or even-
ſacrifice; and may we be perpetually advancing in
reparations for heaven, where we hope to pay thee
f homage and praiſe more worthy of thine accep-
, through Jeſus Chriſt, our great high prieſt, in
e exalted name we preſent our ſocial addreſs; to
n, with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be aſcri-
mmortal praiſes. Amen.

you may cloſe in the words of the Lord's Prayer;
—"In whoſe exalted name and words we preſent
ocial addreſs, calling upon thee—"Our Father," &c.

r the ſake of thoſe whoſe minds are not ſufficiently
ious eaſily to commit the above to memory, I have
d the following:

THOU God of the morning [or evening] in the
ing [or evening] ſhalt thou hear our voice, for we
our prayer to God Moſt High.

In

In the name of our Lord Jeſus, we pray for the pardon of all our ſins, the juſtification of our perſons, and the ſanctification of our natures; and bleſs our family, in him in whom the families of the earth are bleſſed.

We humbly thank thee, O Lord, for the day [or night] paſt, and deſire to commit ourſelves, and all we have, to thy future protection. Shed down, O thou Father of light and grace, upon us the influence of thy good Spirit, and implant and cultivate in us every chriſtian grace and moral virtue, and thereby advance us in our daily preparations for heaven.

O merciful Father, pity and relieve the ſons and daughters of affliction every where, and do good in thy good pleaſure to Zion, and to the whole family of mankind.

Bleſs the government over us, and the miniſtry of the goſpel which we enjoy, and ſpread the knowledge of thyſelf, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent, and fill the whole earth with thy glory: and may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on the earth as it is done in heaven; for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

DISCOURSE

Diſcourſe IX.

On the religious Education of Children and Servants.

EPH. vi. 4.

And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

THE Apoſtle, in the cloſe of this epiſtle, ſet himſelf purpoſely to treat on relative duties; the mutual duties of huſbands and wives, of parents and children, and of maſters and ſervants: for this great apoſtle (as every good miniſter will) inculcated ſocial virtue, as well as the doctrines of grace. He thought it not beneath his office, or beſide the beneficent deſign of his commiſſion, to deſcend into the private walks of life, to give directions, and addreſs exhortations, to every claſs of mankind; for he would not ſhun to declare the whole counſel of God; warning every man, teaching every man, in all wiſdom, that he might preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus. And indeed every goodnatured man, who is not a ſtranger to benevolence, or who wiſhes well to the whole family of mankind, will be deſirous of promoting ſocial virtue and domeſtic happineſs; ſince the public good, the well-ordering of the ſtate, depends very much upon the well-ordering of private families.

ext the Apoſtle addreſſes parents and heads of
the ſubject of a religious education of their
d ſervants, and ſays, And ye, fathers, provoke
children to wrath, but bring them up in the
d admonition of the Lord: which addreſs we
vour to explain, and apply to the ſubject of
s education of families. When the Apoſtle
ye, fathers, provoke not your children to
bring them up in the nurture and admonition
rd, we are to underſtand him as addreſſing
milies in general; and it is as if he had ſaid,
d exhort heads of families to make uſe of no
or tyrannical diſcipline, among or with their
ſervants, as may have a tendency to break
g and tender ſpirits, and ſo diſcourage and
laudable ambition in them to excel in thoſe
which they have a natural genius. And he

goſpel itſelf, and ſo the heads of ſuch families will
ve themſelves in the guilt which their children and
nts may contract by their diſobedience to the goſpel,
nay ſhare with them in final ruin. To prevent this
fatal of all conſequences, the Apoſtle exhorts and
ns it upon all heads of families to bring up their
ren and ſervants in the nurture and admonition of
Lord; i. e. inſtead of a ſevere and rigorous diſci-
, they ſhould tenderly nurſe them up in the know-
, love and practice of religion; early, but tenderly,
the beginning of licentious thoughts and vicious in-
tions, and ſuppreſs with a gentle hand the firſt bud-
of wickedneſs. And, on the other hand, they ſhould
ſh every good and virtuous diſpoſition found in
, and teach the ſhoot how to grow, in ſuch a man-
is to convince the child how much they love him,
are for his honour, peace and happineſs. This, we
hend, is implied in the words of our text: for by
re we underſtand, a nurſing up in knowledge and
manners; and by the *nurture of the Lord*, we are un-
tedly to underſtand, a *religious education*, or a tender-
rſing up in the knowledge and practice of *chriſtianity*;
by the *admonition of the Lord*, we are to underſtand, a
us diſcipline, ſoftened by the lenient hand of parental
ion, kindly admoniſhing them of ſin, its nature and
equence, correcting and removing any falſe notions
h they may have imbibed, ſuppreſſing any evil diſ-
on, which may ariſe in their minds, and guarding
ſt the dangers they may be in, either from their
natural corruptions, or the baleful influence of evil
any.

aving explained the words of our text, we paſs to
out to heads of families that pious and prudent care
e inſtruction and religious education and government
eir families, which we think is implied and recom-
led in the exhortation of the text. We are ſenſible
this is a very tender, and at the ſame time a very

important

of the path others have trod. I
ſame time we acknowledge the
ceived from their excellent writin
cation of families. And we ſha
to offer on this very important ſul
did and impartial examination o
throughout theſe United States in

We think, according to the m
meaning of the text, parents an
are required, with all tenderneſ
up their children and ſervants
practice of religion; by inſtructic
to lead them early into the knc
chriſtianity: and, in order to thi
to form their young and tender m
ſions of God and moral obligation
diſtinguiſhing doctrines of the goſ
aſſemblage of chriſtian virtues wh

Thoſe parents and heads of f
needleſsly or imprudently prov
ſervants to wrath, but would bri
ture and admonition of the Lo

at who knows how soon our children may begin to rm, under the cultivating hand of a wise and instructive arent, tolerably correct ideas of their Creator and Bene-ctor? We find that very early they begin to learn and istinguish sounds, and then to form sentences, and connect eas, and from these connections to draw conclusions: nd why may they not conceive somewhat correctly of Being who is wise, great and good, and worthy to feared and loved? A child who sees a fine house will adily conceive some idea of the builder, and will im-ediately ask, Who built that fine house? And why may e not suppose, when he looks abroad, and views a orld, the sun, moon, stars and clouds, and sees the trees, ountains, rivers and lakes, that the child will naturally nclude that there is some great, wise & good being some-here who made and upholds all these things, especially hen he is told, seriously and repeatedly, that he who uilt all things is God? And if the child is brought to onceive of God as the Author and Supporter of t niverse, he will easily and naturally conceive of him s Creator and Preserver, and conclude that he is to b ved, feared and obeyed. And this is the very begin-ing of piety; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning f wisdom. And, as an argument that children are apable of being taught this fear, the Psalmist invites hem to come unto him that they might be instructed in t: Come, ye children, unto me (saith he) and I will each you the fear of the Lord.

It is certain that there must be some right apprehen-ions of God formed in the minds of our children, before we can advance one step with them in a religious educa-ion, before we can instruct them in the nature of religious bligation: they must be convinced or brought to believe hat God is, and that he is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him, and that he has never said to any of the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face, in vain. Therefore it

loves virtue and goodneſs; t
gracious, and governs the world
that, though there are other in
around us, good and bad ap
government and controul, and r
poſes of his providence and gra
employed in protecting and gua
that bad angels are permitted
wicked; and that he only leav
him, to be tempted and ruine
wicked angels. Our Saviour
children of his covenant people ha
angel, who continually ſtands b
account of his guardianſhip. A
we learn, that Satan, an evil ang
his children any injury until he h
God.

But, while we ſpeak to our chi
who has all the good in his hands
all the evil we can fear or feel, w
do not excite in our children an
is merely mercenary—an obedien
and motives—to ſerve him that h

f the children of men, but that he might maintain
nour of his government, and ſhew his diſpleaſure at
and, though he viſits the tranſgreſſions of his own
e with the rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes, yet
es not take his loving kindneſs from them, nor
his faithfulneſs to fail. This is the repreſentation
made of himſelf to Iſrael, and which he would have
make to their children—The Lord God, gracious
nerciful, ſlow to anger, abundant in goodneſs, keep-
ıercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, trangreſſion
ſin: but yet he will not by any means clear the
r; for he will viſit the iniquity of the fathers upon
hildren, unto the the third and fourth generation.
nuſt at leaſt mix the idea of his goodneſs with his
e, and repreſent him as the kind and indulgent Pa-
of the univerſe. He watches over them who love
ear him, with peculiar tenderneſs. And we may
ince them of his goodneſs by telling them that it is
God who has made them, and who watches over
with more than paternal kindneſs; that all our
would have been fruitleſs without his; that all the
which they receive from us, or from any friend,
ıs from God; that it was he who firſt implanted in
breaſts that affection which we have for them; and
all the power and inclination which we have to do
ı good is no more nor other than he has lodged in
hands for that very purpoſe. We ſhould therefore
ı them ever to reſpect God as the ſource of good-
as well as the ſupreme and righteous judge, to
m all things lie open and naked. This idea of him
naturally beget in them a veneration for God, as
ıeſt and greateſt of all beings.

eſt our children ſhould imbibe the falſe notion of
ting the favour of this great and good God (a no-
ſo repugnant to the goſpel plan, and ſo agreeable to
corrupt and proud nature of man, that it cannot be

top

any thing [illegible]
quirements of his holy law; if
bread, and extends to the thou
well as to the words and actions;
muſt go to God in the name of h
aſk his gracious acceptance of t
imperfect ſervices for the ſake c
and that they muſt never approa
to aſk the pardon of ſin, but in t
Son, Jeſus Chriſt.

That we may give our childre
the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the r
mediation, we muſt tell them pl
rents fell from that ſtate of recti
firſt created, and by that fall (thi
ced) ſubjected themſelves and th
and curſe of God, and could n
foot of their own perſonal merit
out of his mere goodneſs, and et
lence, to propoſe to reſtore fall
finally to ſave him, by the media
Beloved Son; and that the Lo
tarily undertook to mediate in t
tion; for which purpoſe he be

in him, and obey the goſpel: and therefore we are to aſk of God the pardon of ſin, the acceptance of perſons, and eternal life, in the name and for the ſake s Son, Jeſus Chriſt. And we ſhould let our children v, that God requires full ſatisfaction for ſin; not be- e he delights in the pain, puniſhment and death of ational creatures, but becauſe he is holy, and ſin is ſo ful, ſo contrary to his nature, that he cannot pardon nd maintain the honour of his law, vindicate the pu- of his nature, and ſupport the dignity of his moral rnment, without full ſatisfaction: therefore he ſpar- ot his own Son, but gave him up for us all, a ſacri- for ſin, and now freely offers to accept of what his has done and ſuffered, in our nature and ſtead, as full faction for the ſins of the whole world; and is wil- and has promiſed, to pardon and ſave all who will pt of Chriſt for their Saviour, believe in him, and ſub- to him as he is offered to them in the goſpel. And, we may clearly open to our children the way in h they may rationally exerciſe a faith in, and love to, Lord Jeſus, we ſhould often repreſent to them how y he was to undertake for us, how voluntarily he d with the gracious propoſals made in the councils eaven to redeem fallen man, and, that he might be ified for this work, he condeſcended, though he was d of all, to become a helpleſs babe, and a little child, one of them—was obedient to his earthly parent, and n very young evidently loved and feared God his venly Father; that he loved to be in his houſe attend- upon religious exerciſes more than to be at plays and liſh diverſions; that when he grew up to be a man, rent about doing good, teaching every body religion good manners; and that while he lived he took par- lar notice of little children, and was greatly pleaſed n their parents brought them to him for his bleſſing, was much diſpleaſed at his diſciples for rebuking

thoſe who brought them, and ſaid, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven; and he took them and ſet them beſide him, and, embracing them tenderly in his arms, he bleſſed them.

We ſhould further inform our children and houſehold, that after he had finiſhed the work of obedience to the laws of God, and of teaching mankind the way to life more perfectly than ever it had been before, he was accuſed and apprehended as a malefactor, by his enemies. He could indeed have delivered himſelf, confounded and diſarmed all his enemies, and triumphed over them, if he had been of a mind to do it; for by one word, and that the moſt mild and gentle, he ſtruck them all back who were advancing to take him, and threw them all to the ground twice; but he had rather die himſelf, for a while ſuffer the wrath of God for our ſins, than that we ſhould all ſuffer the wrath of God forever: ſo he patiently ſubmitted, and let them come and take him, and, having ſecured him as a criminal, they led him away for a ſham trial, where they accuſed him of many things of which he was not guilty, for he was without ſin, neither was there guile found in his mouth; and they condemned him at laſt for ſaying that he was the Son of God, and after many abuſes and inſults they crucified him between two thieves, as being the worſt of the three; and after he was dead he was taken down from the croſs by one of his friends, and decently buried in a new tomb; and after three days he aroſe from the dead, and was ſeen by many, and freely converſed with his diſciples about religion for forty days together, during which time he endowed his diſciples and friends with rich miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, and, having taught them fully what they were to teach others when he was gone to heaven, and given them all the inſtructions neceſſary for him to give, or for them to receive, he, as he

them before, went up into heaven, in the ſight
iſciples and many others, till he got beyond the
and that, though he is now in heaven, out of
t, yet he knows all we need, and is as tenderly
d for little children as ever he was when on
that he ſees them always, and will hear their
; that he has appointed good angels to be their
and that he will finally ſave them if they love
ſt in him, and live to him. Thus we ſhould
ir children to Chriſt, and open unto them the
faith in him, and excite their love to him; and
them the way by him unto the Father.

uſt endeavour to form the young minds of our
to right apprehenſions of the Holy Spirit of
alled in the Scriptures the Holy Ghoſt) and the
y ſtand in of his enlightening, ſanctifying and
influences, and what encouragement they have to
d hope for them. We need not perplex their
minds with the myſtery of the Trinity, that
ier, Son and Holy Ghoſt are one God in three;
this muſt be left to the improvement of riper
hen they may be better able to digeſt a ſcheme
option, and more clearly to conceive of that ſub-
n which the three ſacred perſons obſerve in ac-
ing the work. We ſhould tell our children, that
y Spirit is a divine perſon, whom God the Fa-
ds into the hearts of the ſinful children of men,
iten their minds in the knowledge of Chriſt, to
eir wills, and to ſanctify their affections, and ſo
ge their hearts, to make them holy, that they
fit for heaven, and be made completely happy
ey die.

uſt often tell them, that they were born in ſin;
r natures are corrupt, and muſt be ſanctified by
ences of the Bleſſed Spirit; and that for this pur-
d has promiſed his Holy Spirit to them who aſk
him;

they can ask their parents for
which is good for them to hav
soon discouraged; for, as Go
promised or unpromised favour
wait his will and time for the

Thus much, we apprehend,
branch of a religious educatio
in bringing our children up in
tion of the Lord.

We now proceed to a second
gious education, and which we
plied in the admonition of th
them right notions of God,
force of moral virtue. And
they must early, seriously and
them respect to superiors, bene
grity, diligence and fidelity in
self-denial in their whole deport

1. Parents should teach their
spect to superiors. One of the
livered by the ministration of
majesty, from Mount Sinai

ren; therefore it is written, Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Children ſhould be taught to reſpect magiſtrates, miniſters, and ſuperiors in general. Abraham bowed himſelf before the children of Heth; Jacob, his wives, and children, bowed themſelves before his elder brother Eſau; and Paul ſpake very reſpectfully to Feſtus the Roman governor. And it is expreſsly commanded, Thou ſhalt riſe up before the hoary head; thou ſhalt honour the face of the old man: and the prophet Iſaiah mentions it as a mark of ſad degeneracy, when children behave themſelves proudly againſt the ancients, and when the mean or lower claſs of the people behave themſelves inſolently againſt the honourable.

Children ſhould be made to know, that to treat all their ſuperiors, eſpecially parents, maſters, miſtreſſes, guardians, rulers and miniſters, with great reſpect, is a duty which they owe to God, and which they cannot withhold without offending him, and endangering their own ſouls: they ſhould be early taught, that God has committed them to the care of their parents, and made them more dependent on them than any other creatures; and that reſpect and obedience to them is a duty they owe to God, for that care and dependence; a duty founded in nature and gratitude. And it ought to be obſerved, that diſobedience to parents, and diſreſpect to ſuperiors, is ranked by St. Paul with thoſe ſins which are committed by them who are given over by God to a reprobate mind. Parents therefore ſhould not indulge their children in any thing which is in direct oppoſition to the known will of God, nor allow them to conduct as they pleaſe—to go and come, to do this or that, without the knowledge and approbation of their parents; for a child left to himſelf will bring his parents to ſhame, and itſelf to ruin.

2. If we would bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, we muſt teach them benevolence to all men. Parents and heads of families ſhould be the more careful and thorough in cultivating this temper in their children and ſervants, as it is a leading trait in the chriſtian character, and of the moſt happy and extenſive conſequence. Love and benevolence are the fulfilling of the law; and in many inſtances they are a law to themſelves, and will of themſelves beget and maintain a very agreeable conduct towards all men. A benevolent and kind diſpoſition and behaviour will procure for our children many friends, render them an honour to the families they ſpring from, make them bleſſings to ſociety at large, and be a preſumptive evidence that they are inſpired with that divine wiſdom which is from above, and is firſt pure, and then peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be entreated, full of love and good fruits. All the bright and beauteous aſſemblage of ſocial virtues, and the various amiable branches of relative duty, are comprehended in *chriſtian benevolence*: this, when deeply impreſſed on the young and tender minds of our children, by a religious education, accompanied with the regenerating ſpirit of the goſpel, will engage them to act upon the principles of integrity towards others, even before they are capable of conceiving clearly, or ſenſibly feeling, the force of thoſe moral obligations which reſult from the more abſtract principles of mutual equity. And we think it is evident from obſervation, that benevolence is one of the firſt virtuous impreſſions which a child is capable of receiving, and that golden rule of benevolence and equity is felt and underſtood by them as ſoon as they are capable of connecting ideas—As you would that others ſhould do unto you, do you even ſo unto them. The propriety of this rule is ſo obvious, that it does not exceed the capacity of a child; and, if once fixed by a ſeaſonable education, will not fail of adorning a uſeful life; as it will enable him to

with impartiality his conduct towards his equals, and always keep the mind open to conviction, whenever depart from this golden rule. We ſhould teach our ren that the chriſtian religion conſiſts very much in good to others; that Jeſus went about doing good; he improved every opportunity to ſhew kindneſs to oor and diſtreſſed. We ſhould uſe every proper od to form the hearts of our children to ſentiments manity, tenderneſs and compaſſion; we ſhould tell that kindneſs to the poor and diſtreſſed is a duty; to ſhew this kindneſs is to be and to act like Chriſt, eſt friend of mankind. We ſhould often ſet this ex- e before them, and (as a pious and learned author* ves) we ſhould ſometimes make them our almoners, hom we may ſend relief to the needy and diſtreſſed, ncourage them on particular occaſions to part with we allow them to call their own, to the proper ob- of charity, at the ſame time taking care to replace they give away with ſomething; that they may feel eight of that truth, He who giveth to the poor lend- o the Lord. By theſe means we may inſpire them a benevolent temper from their cradles, and, by lay- old on the very firſt feelings of humanity, may form to that temper and conduct which will be the glory er age; and, practiſing upon this temper, they will ne an honour to religion, a great comfort to us, and bleſſings to the world, and will be likely to riſe to, continue in, affluence, when others, of a parſimoni- pirit, will ſuffer want: for the promiſe is, Give, and ll be given to you again; good meaſure, ſhaken to- r, preſſed down, and running over, ſhall men (or, as very writer† critically obſerves, ſhall God and con- ce) give into your boſoms. Agreeably to this, the King obſerves, There is that which ſcattereth, and ncreaſeth; and there is that which withholdeth more is meet, and it tendeth to poverty. The liberal ſoul ſhall

* Dr. Doddridge. † Mr. Harvey.

those parts of time so valuable;
induſtry are ordinances of heave
connexion which they have with
very well reckoned branches of
Diligence and induſtry are moral
ground that ſloth and idleneſs a
we are members one of another,
have a right to the uſefulneſs of e
we would put our children into
ſtations in ſocial life, and to pay
politic which each member owes,
them in the right improvement o
which the Author of nature, and
man mind, has entruſted with ther
Occupy till I come. It is not likely t
himſelf with honour, or to advant
in idleneſs: nay, without a cloſe
to buſineſs in childhood and youth
from them, either honourable or
or the public. Seeſt thou a man
he ſhall ſtand before kings, and n

We do not think that as ſoon
buſineſs they ſhould be denied in
able to their age and rank in life

they do nothing elſe, at a time when they are able to earn half their living. The diverſions of children ſhould be at the appointment and under the regulation of their parents, and their youthful hours, as one expreſſes it, ſhould be wiſely divided between their buſineſs and their plays. God did not allow Adam, no, not in a ſtate of innocence, to be idle, but ſent him into the garden to keep and to dreſs it.

Diligence, too, in buſineſs, is the way to avoid a thouſand ſnares, temptations and evils to which children are expoſed, and by which they are often ruined. Wiſe and pious parents, who are properly concerned for the beſt good of their children, will keep them as much as they can out of the way of thoſe gilded and dangerous ſnares, and will early aſſign them ſuch employments as are ſuitable to their age, ſex, rank and capacity; ſo moderated, diverſified and alleviated by innocent and ſeaſonable diverſions, wiſely directed, that the young mind may be neither overwhelmed nor fatigued.

And, as the firſt idea children form of labour is that of a taſk, every prudent parent or maſter of a family will render that taſk as agreeable as poſſible, by the alleviations of well choſen and regulated diverſions. Parents who bring up their children in idleneſs have but little comfort to expect from them when they arrive to mature age; eſpecially if an Athenian law ſhould take place, (which indeed is not without ſome foundation in reaſon) viz. that thoſe children who were brought up by their parents in idleneſs were not obliged to ſupport them if they ſhould come to want in their old age. Therefore, when parents have not employment at home, they ſhould place their children in ſuch other families where they may be taught induſtry; but then care muſt be taken that they be ſuch families as are pious and well governed. Diligence, joined with religion, is the ſureſt path to wealth and honour.

4. If

rents and maſters of families would give their
d ſervants a religious education, and bring
the nurture and admonition of the Lord,
teach them integrity and uprightneſs in all
ct towards their fellow men. God requires
inward part, and that the internal principle
er itſelf in the external conduct; and it is eſ-
he character of every good man, that in ſim-
godly ſincerity he has his converſation in the
herefore every conſcientious perſon, who ſhall
are of the education of children and youth,
eful not to give the leaſt countenance to a
diſhoneſt diſpoſition in his young charge.
n that the corruptions of the human heart
ork very early in children; and it is truly
diſcover the reality and ſtrength of innate cor-
the cunning artifice, ſly deceit, and childiſh

their play or play-things, is a ſin, diſpleaſing to God, and diſhonourable to them, and what will expoſe them to puniſhment and ſhame when grown up: for the ſame diſpoſition if indulged will lead them to the commiſſion of more groſs and direct acts of diſhoneſty.

Parents ſhould decide, too, the little diſputes which ariſe among their children and ſervants, not arbitrarily, but with a manifeſt ſhew of reaſon and equity, in a manner ſuited to their capacities, and which may faſten conviction upon the minds of the little diſputants: and the parent's determination muſt be the end of all ſtrife. And the parent muſt not admit of an arreſt of judgment, on the complaint of one or other of the contending parties, without ſuch obvious reaſon for it as may be ſeen and felt by both; nor may the parent give the child againſt whom the caſe turned ſomething to pacify or to make up for the loſs of the caſe; for this will carry conviction, even to a child's apprehenſion, that the parent is conſcious that ample juſtice has not been done; and this will leſſen both the parent's authority and the child's eſteem.

Parents ſhould by all means inculcate upon the minds of their children theſe texts of Scripture—He who walketh uprightly walketh ſurely, but he who perverts his way ſhall be found—The Lord loveth the righteous, and beholds with a favourable countenance the upright in heart—A lying tongue is but for a moment—Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord—and, All liars ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone,

5. If parents or heads of families would bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, they muſt teach them a meek, courteous and amiable conduct towards the different ranks and orders of men. Pride is the poiſon of our natures. A ſtain ſo deep, and ſpread ſo wide over our lapſed natures, ſhould be very carefully watched, and its operation very ſoon reſtrained. Parents

ſhould

now that humility and a condeſcendi
righteſt ornament of youth---that a
rit is in the ſight of God of great pri
age the eſteem and affection of all ar
hem in a very advantageous point of
onour is humility.

s of families ſhould teach their childr
reverence and reſpect their ſuperiors;
em they muſt be ſilent and reſerved, a
rnment of the tongue; a point of gr
every rank and ſtage of life: to equa
ſſume a forward and pert air, nor
s, domineering behaviour to inferior
eaneſt ſervant (for there ſhould be n
ſtian family); but they ſhould be mo
d obliging to all, and make every b
ay around them as they can. This

may open to them while acting on the ſtage of
life. Children poſſeſſed of this ſelf-government,
ho grow up in the ſteady practice of it, are and
happier in this world than they can be without
are poſſeſſed of the largeſt fortune, the greateſt
honours, and the moſt unlimited power. Parents
govern their children's appetites, both with reſpect
ir food, clothing and diverſions. Reaſon ſhould
what kind and what quantity of food the child
eat. Parents may deſtroy, ſhorten the lives,
urt the ſenſes, of their children, by indulging an
onable appetite. The food of children ſhould be
ſimple, light, and ſometimes ſcanty. Cleanlineſs,
t delicacy, ſhould always be obſerved with reſpect
children's food, and ſometimes, let the circum-
s of the parents be what they may, children ſhould
ard, that they may learn to make thoſe ſhifts
luxury and delicacy are ſtrangers to. Children's
for dreſs and finery is commonly ſtrong; and
ore, while the reaſon of the child is weak, he muſt be
ned by the reaſon of the parents, which will never
e beyond ability and rank: and oftentimes the
ſhould be denied the gewgaws of faſhion, and the
ornaments of dreſs, merely becauſe a very ſtrong
for them is diſcovered; and always when they
roufly ſay that *they will have them.* They ſhould be
to know that ſuch a temper, and ſuch indecent ex-
ns to a ſuperior, to a parent, are ſufficient reaſons
hey ſhould be denied: for a child left to himſelf,
owed to carry his point by clamour and obſtinacy,
ring himſelf to ſhame and ruin.

ving mentioned what we apprehend to be the moſt
ſal things in a religious education, we cloſe the
with a few arguments drawn from ſeveral very
s conſiderations, that, if it be poſſible, we may per-
ſuade

every maſter and miſtreſs of a family t
actice of the above-mentioned rules.

It is a pleaſing duty to give our childr
a religious education. The God of natu
ed in the breaſt of parents ſuch a ſtrong a
dependent offspring, that it is impoſſibl
k and promote the child's happineſs with
ſame time great inward pleaſure and ſa
is is one of thoſe ways of wiſdom whic
efs, and one of thoſe paths which are pe
endeavours ſhould ſucceed, and we ſho
g and tender minds of our offspring ope
l influence of knowledge and virtue; and
our tender charge, in conſequence of ſu
inquiring with a becoming ſolicitude
r God, and Jeſus their Saviour, and after

" 1. From the ſuſceptibility of young minds. Children early receive impreſſions, and are very tenacious of firſt impreſſions. Though their minds are not like clean paper, without a blot or any innate contamination, yet they are much eaſier impreſſed and formed to virtue and goodneſs before theſe innate corruptions are grown into habits and deep-rooted principles of vice and wickedneſs. If we had a piece of ground, which was good in itſelf, but full of bad weeds in the firſt ſtage of vegetation, we ſhould not think it prudent to ſtay until thoſe weeds were grown up into ſturdy plants, and their roots had ſtruck deep, before we ſhould make a trial to cultivate the ſoil, and caſt in the good ſeed; and we ſhould hope for ſucceſs if we were early in ſubduing the noxious, and in cultivating the good, ſeed. So the earlier care ſhould be taken of our little ones, from the melancholy conſideration of their having vitiated natures; eſpecially ſince obſervation and experience aſſure us, that firſt impreſſions are the longeſt retained; that the veſſel commonly receives the ſtrongeſt tincture from the liquor which was firſt put into it; and that the tender twig and the ſlender ſhoot is much eaſier bent than the ſturdy oak. From theſe obvious principles of nature, Solomon ventured to deliver it as a proverb, Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

" 2. The probability of ſucceeding well in the religious education of our children may be argued, further, from a religious education being the appointed means of grace, and the expreſs command of God. God particularly appointed and commanded his people Iſrael to inſtruct their children in every branch of their religion; they were to teach them the meaning of their laws, cuſtoms, ſacrifices and religious rites. And our text is an expreſs command to all parents and heads of families to bring up their children in the knowledge and practice of the chriſtian

; and this is urged as an appointed means of more eſtabliſhed ſtate of piety.

obability of ſucceeding may be argued, from which has generally attended the ſerious, pru- ithful endeavours of parents to form their der the influence of a religious education, to and virtue. God, foreſeeing the good ſuc- would attend Abraham's wiſe inſtruction and ine, ſaid, I know Abraham, that he will com- uſehold after him, and they ſhall keep the Lord. The parent and grand-parent of othy ſucceeded well in their endeavours to religiouſly: they early taught him to read, child to underſtand the Holy Scriptures, e bleſſing of God made him wiſe unto ſalva- cannot ſome of us teſtify, from our own

ome there are who are proof againſt all the force of a ious and well-directed education, who, like the ſteel, row harder under the ſtrokes of the hammer; while here are others who have been bred up in families where here has not been the form of religion, nor ſo much as he ſhadow of prudent diſcipline or religious inſtruction, nd yet have been ſnatched as brands out of the burning, nd have been made the trophies of divine and ſovereign race. But theſe inſtances are rare; juſt enough to rove that grace is ſovereign, not confined to means, nor be expected without.

It is the opinion of the moſt accurate writers upon edu- ation, and who were good judges of human nature, that the men we meet, or taking mankind as they riſe, nine ut of ten are what they are (good or bad) according as ey have been educated. If it is ſo, or if the bigger alf of mankind are what they are according as they ave been educated from their youth up, then there is a robability that our children may be. If then we would ot have them enter the ſtage, to act their part on the eatre of this world, ignorant, profane, corrupt and vi- ous, we muſt bring them up in the nurture and admoni- on of the Lord.

4. The fourth and laſt argument that we ſhall make e of, to engage heads of families pioufly to educate eir children and ſervants, ſhall be taken from the im- ortance of the riſing generation. And it is certain that e honour of God, the ſupport of religion, and your wn comfort, depend very much upon the conduct of our children: and this conſideration muſt furniſh a ery cogent argument to engage you to do your utmoſt at they may be formed by knowledge and grace to ſerve the noble purpoſes of public utility. We are oving off the ſtage, as our fathers have done: for our thers, where are they? Gone; and we are entered in eir room, and muſt ſoon give place to our children,

e the only ſupporters, under God, of the cauſe
d religion. And can we expect that they will
pport and defend that cauſe which they have
t to deſpiſe and contemn, by a looſe, careleſs
lar education? Can we reaſonably ſuppoſe
will riſe up, and warmly plead the cauſe, the
neglected cauſe, in a degenerate and corrupt
we are ſleeping in the duſt, if we neglect to
the knowledge and fear of God—if we neglect
em up in the way they ſhould go—in the way
God, of faith in his Son, benevolence and
ſs towards all men, and temperance and ſo-
rds themſelves? Can we think that they, al-
upt in their own natures, neglected in their
and ſtrangers to the power of godlineſs, will
old ſtand, when ſurrounded by a thouſand
and as many evil examples and maintain

, whether there is any thing which is ſo likely to
on a general deſertion of the all-intereſting cauſe,
neglect of the education of your children. But
ſt yield the pious parent much comfort and great
latien, if he ſhould ſucceed—if he ſhould live to
s children grow up in knowledge and virtue, the
r and ſupport of his family. It muſt refreſh his
heart, and become a ſource of gladneſs in his de-
g years, and inſpire his hopes of Zion's proſperity
he ſhall be gathered to his fathers: for a wiſe ſon
h a glad father.

if you ſhould not ſucceed to your wiſh, and ſhould
the mortification to ſee them grow up vain and vi-
you will have two things to comfort you; one is,
pe that God will remember your pious endeavours
rvent prayers for them, and by his almighty grace
hem from final ruin, though it ſhould not be until
days are numbered and finiſhed; and the other is,
though they ſhould finally periſh, yet you will be
o reflect that you have in ſome good meaſure done
duty, and that their final ruin will not be charged
r account. But, on ſuppoſition you ſhould ſucceed,
re is the higheſt probability you will, what muſt
conſolation be at death! To ſee around your dying
our children, pieces of yourſelves, with filial affec-
nd pious ſolicitude affording all the ſupport and
rt in their power; if you can look on them as on
for whom you have travailed in birth again until
has been formed in them; whom you have not
urſed with care, but educated religiouſly, in conſe-
e of which you have reaſon to believe that they are
e the children of God by faith, and heirs of glory;
ow comfortably may you die! Supported by ſuch
pect, how cheerfully can the dying parent take his
leave of them and the world, ſaying, Behold I die,
od will be with you, and conduct you ſafely through
the

eſs of this world to the heavenly reſt! How may a dying parent ſay, My work is done, I d my courſe, but I leave behind me thoſe who , ſtand up for God, and ſteadily appear on the —thoſe who will plead the cauſe of truth, ſs, peace and holineſs, with fidelity and a well- eal, and I hope with better ſucceſs than I have eave my children in an enſnaring world, orrupt age, when the advocates of infidelity uſineſs are doing what they can to undermine of our holy religion; but I leave them under my Heavenly Father and theirs, under the God and their God, and under the guardian Redeemer and theirs: and though, my dear ſhall ſoon be ſeparated from you, as far as om earth, yet, with the reviving hope of ſee- ain, when you ſhall in your order ſafely ar-

d eyeing you as the authors and inſtruments of
in and miſery!——But the ſcene is too pain-
forbear.

e are ſome of the arguments with which the duty
ging up our children in the nurture and admoni-
the Lord is enforced. For the fuller handling
ſubject, we refer the reader to Dr. Doddridge's
s on education and the importance of the riſing
ion; to whom we acknowledge ourſelves much
d for many of the leading thoughts in this diſ-

cloſe with ſaying—If theſe ſerious conſiderations
thetic arguments have their proper weight with
and heads of families, they muſt be ſufficient to
them to ſupport their weight of care, and ſur-
every trifling difficulty which may lie in the way
ig their children and ſervants that religious edu-
above recommended, and arm them with fortitude
it to form and execute Joſhua's reſolution—As
and my houſe, we will ſerve the LORD.

DISCOURSE

On Filial Piety.

COL. iii. 20.

Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is
ing unto the Lord.

THE great Apoſtle, that he might be clear
blood of all men, and might impartially
the whole counſel of God, in this epiſtle to the C
interſperſed practical precepts with relative duties
the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of the goſpel. In
graph, which begins at the 18th verſe, he dwel
upon relative duties—on thoſe which mutually
tween huſbands and wives, parents and childr
verſe I have choſen for the theme of the follo
courſe leads me to conſider the duty which chil
to their parents, under the general term of o
Children, obey your parents in all things; for th

own with his parents to Nazareth, and was ſubject to hem.

By children, in the text, we are to underſtand, all the outh of a family, whether they are natural children, apprentices, ſervants, or thoſe who are committed to the are of the heads of a family; and by parents we are to nderſtand, all heads of families, whether they be fathers r mothers, maſters, miſtreſſes, or guardians. So under he general character of parents are comprehended rulers, ainiſters and ſchoolmaſters; as theſe are called fathers f the people. But I ſhall principally aim to point out nd inculcate the duty which youth and children owe to heir parents, or to thoſe who have the care and inſtruction f their youth; and, as I am writing or ſpeaking to chilren, I ſhall uſe great plainneſs of ſpeech—ſpeak as unto children, and uſe plainneſs and ſuch ſimplicity of ſtyle as may be beſt adapted to their capacities, though not below the dignity of truth and grace, or beneath the notice of heads of families, who are ſo nearly intereſted in theſe inſtructions given to their tender charge.

1. As love is the genuine principle of all true obedience, ſo it is a natural duty we owe to God, the parent of the univerſe; and, next to him, the duty which all children owe to their parents, who under God are inſtrumental of their exiſtence, preſervation and comfort; ſo that love is the firſt duty which children owe to their parents. Children who do not love their parents ſincerely, are without natural affection; which is highly criminal, and which the Apoſtle reckons among the very worſt ins which the heathen and hypocrites were guilty of. They muſt love their parents, or they cannot do their duty to them, but will be guilty of diſobedience, even while out of fear, or from ſelf-intereſt, they pay an exterobedience to them. Children ſhould love their pa- not merely becauſe they are their parents, but beGod has commanded it, and it is right, and well pleaſing

the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who loved his parents,
erefore obedient unto them. Children ſhould
ield all that reſpect and obedience to their pa-
is the genuine fruit and natural effect of filial
ſe who do not love their parents, but hate
wiſh them ill, are both monſters of ingratitude,
lient to God, and muſt expect that the curſe
ll follow them in this life, and that he will
the objects of his diſpleaſure in the next: for
he who ſetteth light by his father, and de-
bey his mother. And all the people ſhall
" *Deut.* xxvii. 16.

he duty of children to fear their parents, not
ſh, but with a reverential and filial, fear; for
natural power and authority over them, and
ave them acknowledge and revere that autho-

l of offending them; for it is a ſin againſt God,
n he in the common courſe of providence generally
hes in this life. God has promiſed temporal good,
ard proſperity, to them who honour their father
mother; ſaying, Honour thy father and mother,
hy days may be long upon the land which the Lord
God giveth thee.—Therefore—

Children muſt honour and reſpect, as well as fear
reverence, their parents. The command we juſt
ioned is, as the Apoſtle obſerves, accompanied and
ced by a promiſe. The ſame God who ſaid, Thou
fear thy mother and thy father, has ſaid, Honour
ather and thy mother; which if they did from filial
ſt, they ſhould, as the conſequence of ſuch reſpect,
a long and proſperous life, as far at leaſt as it
t ſerve for God's glory and their higheſt good.
command is not only found among thoſe ten moral
pts publiſhed from Mount Sinai with awful pomp
ſolemnity, but it is what our Lord Jeſus Chriſt re-
d with peculiar emphaſis. Our Lord ſaid, God
manded, ſaying, Honour thy father and thy mother;
he who curſeth father or mother, let him die the
. And the Apoſtle after him enjoins, Honour thy
r and mother, which is the firſt commandment with
iſe. Children are bound to honour and reſpect their
nts, by the moſt ſolemn ties; and they ſhould do it
by words and in their whole deportment. Chil-
ſhould ſpeak reſpectfully to and of their parents.
n they ſpeak to them, it ſhould be with ſome hono-
additions, as *Sir*, and *Madam*. When they ſpeak
m to others, it ſhould be with the appropriate *My—*
Father, and *My Mother*—not *Father*, and *Mother*, as
would of any other aged people, to whom they
not related, or to whom they were under no ſpecial
ations, or as if they were aſhamed of the relation.
; when he ſpake to his father it was with the great-

er approached the throne to make her requ
and bowed himſelf unto her; and when l
d her on his right hand, he then ſaid, *My Mot*
This was written, no doubt, for the exampl
ren, be their circumſtances what they may.
king did not view himſelf as releaſed from h
child, a ſon, either by his age or royalty.
though advanced to the firſt office next to th
gypt, inquired of his brethren, with great reſp
tion, Is *my Father* yet alive? and when he ſa
he firſt time after his long exile, he roſe up, an
mſelf; and when he preſented his two ſons
r for a bleſſing, he again bowed himſelf befo
his face to the earth. This teaches children
eak to and of their parents in the honourable
ful ſtyle, *My Father*, or *My Mother*; beſure
contemptuous manner, as ſuperannuated foll
an, or the *old woman*: and there are dreadfi
unced againſt thoſe who do, or who deſpiſe
& their parents: "Curſed be he who ſetteth
is father or his mother. And all the peop
Amen." It is a ſin ſo directly contrary to th
od, and the light of nature, that if ſuch ſho

riſtian burial, and their bodies lie expoſed to
a prey to birds or beaſts of the foreſt, or
hes of the ſea. And if children ſhould carry
ontempt or their diſreſpect of their parents ſo
o curſe them or ſtrike them, the great God views
worthy of death; therefore it is written, He who
his father or his mother ſhall ſurely be put to
and he who alſo curſeth his father or his mother
rely be put to death. And though ſuch wicked
n may eſcape puniſhment from men, yet the Lord
d will not ſuffer them to eſcape his righteous judg-
Children ſhould not deſpiſe their parents becauſe
e old, infirm, crooked or childiſh, nor think that
of their infirmities they are not obliged to pay
nour and reſpect, or that they may treat them
glect or unkindneſs: this is a great ſin, and the
ngratitude, and when ſhewn to tender and aged
, is one of the moſt heinous crimes, and is puniſh-
death by ſome heathen nations in the preſent day.
gratitude is the more heinous, becauſe parents very
aften upon themſelves thoſe infirmities of age by
e, pains and labour which they have ſuſtained in
, nurſing, educating and watching over their chil-
their youthful days; and for them to deſpiſe, diſ-
or diſhonour them becauſe of the infirmities which
ve brought upon them, is the very height of in-
d baſeneſs, and what does not commonly (if ever)
uniſhed in this life: whereas, on the contrary,
, reſpect and kindneſs, ſhown by children to their
nd infirm parents, is commonly, if not always,
d with long life and proſperity, ſo far at leaſt as
ſerve the divine glory and their happineſs.

ed, parents may, through infirmity and aged
od, require that which is quite unreaſonable and
; but even then children ſhould kindly endeavour
ade them out of their wrong notions, rather than
violently

poſe them, or deſpiſe or laugh at them for
ect of ſuperannuation. And, as children are
o deſpiſe their mothers than their fathers for
ge and infirmities, ſo God has particularly
, Deſpiſe not thou thy mother when ſhe is
this is the more ungrateful and abuſive, as
the pain of bearing, and the care of nurſing
g up, the children, the firſt care of whom
uble weight upon her. Reſpect and kindneſs
nature which ſhould be paid in old age, eſpe-
nother; and to withhold it betrays both fol-
atitude; and therefore it is ſaid, A fooliſh
th his mother. There is none but the wick-
baſe who will do it. Children ſhould be ſo
heir parents' honour, as kindly to cover their
and even their faults, when they are old,

bour or a ſtranger without his knowledge and leave. This is a very great ſin, and highly reprobated in Scripture. He who robbeth his father or his mother, and ſaith, It is no tranſgreſſion, the ſame is the companion of the deſtroyer: and he who waſteth his father, and chaſeth away his mother, is a ſon who cauſeth ſhame, and bringeth reproach. Children, then, muſt be very careful that they do not defraud and injure their parents, either by waſting away their time, which is their parents' property, or by taking away and miſuſing any part of their property without their leave, or by plunging them into debt, or putting them to needleſs expenſe; all which are ſpecies of robbery. Such are companions of the deſtroyer, and, if indulged, will moſt probably ſoon be joined with thoſe who live on rapine and murder. Their ſin is very heinous, and is commonly attended with the moſt melancholy and fatal conſequences; they bring down the gray hairs of their parents with ſorrow to the grave, and themſelves to ruin.

As children ſhould be honeſt and faithful, ſo they ſhould be obedient to all their parents' lawful commands. I ſay *lawful* commands—for though our text ſays, Children, obey your parents in *all things*, yet it muſt be underſtood with limitations—in all things *lawful*: for it is poſſible that parents may command their children to that which is wrong and ſinful, though it is preſumed in our text that they will not. And though it can hardly be ſuppoſed, yet it is a fact that ſome have done it. Rebecca commanded Jacob to ſpeak falſely, and to deceive his aged father; and others may command their children to work on the Sabbath, to ſteal ſomething which they may want, and to lie to cover the theft, or to ſwear profanely or falſely. And ſo in other caſes, where it is plain from the light of nature and Scripture that it is contrary to the mind and will of God, in ſuch caſes it is plain that children are not to obey their parents; for we muſt obey

than man. Children are not to displeaſe God, heir own ſouls, to gratify their parents' hu- ions, or vicious inclinations. When children d to obey their parents, it is that obedience ell pleaſing to the Lord: therefore it is not hildren, obey your parents, for it is right, i. e. s which are right and lawful; but it is ſaid, bey your parents, for this is well pleaſing unto and he cannot be well pleaſed with an obe- ommands which are unlawful in themſelves, diſpleaſing to him; and indeed ſuch a com- ot an obedience to parents, for they have no hority to command their children to do things to God: and obedience is obeying lawful au-

ldren would do their duty to their parents,

and common equity, for all the comfort and ſupport we can poſſibly afford them.

Kindneſs to old, decrepid parents was always thought an eminent branch of filial piety. It is ſo plain a dictate of nature, that the heathens have ever celebrated it as an act of filial piety. Eneas makes a diſtinguiſhed figure, both in ancient poetry and hiſtory; but chiefly for the care he took of, and the kindneſs he ſhewed to, his aged and helpleſs father: for, in the burning of *Troy* by the *Grecians*, he took care to ſave his aged father. When obliged to flee in the night, he took him on his back, and, under the cover of darkneſs, made his eſcape, through raging flames, armed enemies, and ten thouſand deaths; but no danger or difficulty was ſufficient to prevail on him to forſake or neglect his aged and helpleſs parent. He was therefore ever after celebrated as the Pious Eneas. Joſeph, who was exalted to great power and influence in Egypt, did not think the circumſtances of his needy father below his notice; but kindly ſent for him, and tenderly nouriſhed him through the famine: and before he could remove him within his own juriſdiction, he ſent him a preſent of the good things of the land of Egypt; what was for his delight and comfort, as well as what was neceſſary for his ſupport. He was willing his aged father ſhould ſhare with him the beſt he had; therefore he ſent him not only corn for bread, but the good things of the land for his comfort and delight. He did not ſay, as it is to be feared ſome have done, The old man has got beyond his uſefulneſs; any thing will do for him, no matter what, if it does but keep ſoul and body together. No; he ſent ten aſſes loaded with the rarities and delicacies of Egypt, and ten more loaded with corn and the neceſſaries of life, as a preſent to his aged father. But the moſt worthy of all examples is that of our Bleſſed Saviour. When ſurrounded with the ignominy of the croſs, and pierced with the pains of death;

hen inſulted by a lawleſs mob, and ſinking un-
gonies of diſſolving nature; he piouſly recom-
is aged mother to the filial care of his beloved
he ſacred hiſtorian obſerves, no doubt for our
that, while Jeſus hung on the croſs, he ſaw his
nding near it, and his favourite diſciple John
; and he ſaid to him, Behold thy mother. He
rſtood the language of filial piety, and from
he took her home to his own houſe, and no
the beſt care he could of her through the re-
f her life. Our Saviour condemned negligence
, and ſeverely rebuked thoſe who countenanced
hough it was a tradition of the fathers, and
y the lawyers and rulers of that age, yet it was
approved of by our Saviour. The tradition
f a child brought any part of his eſtate to the

1. Children muſt ſubmit to all the lawful commands of their parents: for though it is required in our text, Children, obey your parents *in all things*, it is evident that this obedience muſt not be a blind, unlimited obedience, as I obſerved before, but limited to all things lawful, or well pleaſing to God. In thoſe only children are to yield a cheerful and ready obedience. But when parents do, as it is poſſible they may, command their children to do ſome things which are wrong in themſelves, and contrary to the mind and the revealed will of God, either through ignorance, prejudice, paſſion or wickedneſs, yet even then children ſhould not obſtinately reſiſt, or contemptuouſly oppoſe, their parents, but humbly perſuade them to deſiſt from ſuch unlawful or unreaſonable requirements; and they may modeſtly ſhew their parents wherein they are wrong, and let them know that the reaſon why they do not readily and cheerfully obey them is, becauſe they fear God, and dare not diſpleaſe him, being bound to obey God, their heavenly father, rather than their earthly parents, whoſe authority is ſubordinate to his.

2. Children ſhould patiently ſubmit to the reaſonable correction of their parents.

What I have to ſay under this head chiefly reſpects young children, who muſt ſometimes come under the diſcipline of the rod, before reaſon and moral ſenſe is become ſufficiently powerful to curb the exuberance of youthful paſſions. Yet the correction of the rod ſhould be with parents their ſtrange work; not frequent, nor ever uſed when the remonſtrance of reaſon, parental authority, or the power of perſuaſion, will anſwer, or have the deſired effect: but when theſe fail, then the rod muſt adminiſter inſtruction, as it will to a wiſe ſon. The Wiſe King ſays (ſpeaking of the diſcipline of the rod) Correct thy ſon, and he ſhall give thee reſt; yea, he ſhall give delight

thy ſoul. Children muſt bear patiently de-
ction, and grow more teachable, dutiful and
reby; ſo that their parents may have reſt and
in the happy fruit of wiſely and ſeaſonably
chaſtiſements. They ſhould love and reve-
parents the more for needful and wholeſome
for their parents cannot give a better proof
e and tender concern for the beſt good and
intereſt of their children. He who ſpares
ils the child; nay, he implicitly hates him, or
hated him. Therefore if children ſhould hate
s for chaſtiſing them when they deſerve and
l do it for their good, and not to gratify their
s, they are in danger of being utterly and
eſtroyed: for he who hateth reproof ſhall die;
being often reproved hardeneth himſelf, ſhall
deſtroyed, and that without remedy.



itly hear, but deſpiſe and contemn, the counſels and
ſtions of his parents. The Spirit of God, by Solo-
calls upon children to hearken to the counſels and
ſtions of both father and mother: My ſon, hear
ſtructions of thy father, and forſake not the law of
iother: and a wiſe ſon (ſays the ſame inſpired wri-
/ill hear the inſtructions of a father. So that thoſe
en who will not hear attentively, are diſobedient to
and, in the judgment of that wiſdom which cannot
re fools, and void of underſtanding.

ldren who are grown up to years of diſcretion and
ſtanding, are as apt to ſlight the counſel and ad-
f their parents in the article of marriage as in any
aing, and are as often wrong in that as in any one

Children are very apt to ſay, In chooſing our
ompanions for life, we are free, and can be under
ntroul; and madly run on, with little judgment,
:ſs regard to their parents' advice and counſel, till
have broke their hearts, and pierced themſelves
gh with many ſorrows, and, too late, ſee their own
d folly. But, children! I have the heart of a pa-
and muſt ſpeak freely and feelingly to you. You
uch miſtaken if you think we have no right to in-
ſe with our advice, counſel and direction, in the ſe-
and delicate caſe of your marriage. Yes, my young
ls—our honour, our comfort and our intereſt are
ncerned in it, and are intimately connected with it.
we ought to be conſulted in ſo weighty and intereſt-
a affair. Nay, you ought to be pleaſed and gratifi-
o, when that can be done conſiſtently with your
neſs, and it is to be hoped that our advice and
el will never, on ſo tender a ſubject, interfere with
natural rights, honour or happineſs. But if it ſhould
ppen, children ſhould never violently oppoſe, but by
a, perſuaſion and filial condeſcenſion endeavour to
over their parents, that their choice may coincide
with

own. And children had better deny them-
ratification of their own fancy, than obſtinate-
parent in ſo intereſting a point.

ver, parents are evidently unreaſonable, and
y unworthy motives, in their advice, without
to perſonal worth, as it is very poſſible they
en children are not bound to obey them; for
rity does not extend ſo far as to require unrea-
unworthy things. Children are not obliged
oſe whom they cannot love with complacen-
em becauſe they want perſonal worthineſs or
But no child ſhould obſtinately ſay, *I will*
or that perſon, whether my parents will
r not; for, unleſs they can give a better rea-
a raſh reſolution than Sampſon could, (be-
eaſeth me well) they will have reaſon to re-

their advice and counſel, but they have a divine right, from the Univerſal Parent of men, to forbid their children's marrying with vain, wicked and unſuitable perſons; and if any children are hardy enough to marry againſt their parents' will, and contrary to their wiſe inſtructions, prudent advice, and parental counſel, they diſobey God, and muſt expect to go without his bleſſing, and muſt anſwer for this conduct at his awful tribunal in the laſt day.

I cloſe this head in the words of a late pious author on this ſubject:* "In chooſing a yoke-fellow (ſaith he) be ſure keep within the bounds of chriſtian profeſſion: marry no one who is not profeſſedly united to Chriſt, and in the judgment of charity ſincerely religious. Next to religion, have a particular regard to ſuitableneſs in age, quality, education and natural temper. Regard theſe things, and pleaſe God and yourſelves, and you ſhall not diſpleaſe me, in your choice."

Upon the whole, you, my dear children, ſee what it is to obey your parents in all things which are right, and well pleaſing to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

It implies, that you love, honour and reſpect them, and ſubmit to them in all things which are lawful; that you comfort, aſſiſt and ſupport them when they ſtand in need of your help; that you conſult them upon the important article of marriage, and endeavour to pleaſe them, as their comfort, honour and intereſt are nearly concerned in your marriage; as you will find if ever you become parents, and live to ſee your children married. Now theſe things may look like ſmall matters, not worth your attention, or ſuch a ſerious and public notice; but they are what the great God has thought fit to enjoin upon us, and commanded us to inculcate upon you our children, and has promiſed his bleſſing to thoſe who conform to theſe inſtructions,

* *Mr. Philip Henry's* Advice to his Children.

d practiſe this filial piety. He has threatened
thoſe children who do not obey their pa-
things which are right and well pleaſing to
the bleſſings and the curſes of the Almighty
things; they are not to be trifled with; for
bleſſing is contained all that you can need or
n the curſe of God are all the evils you can
.

your obedience to your parents may be pleaſ-
eptable to God, it muſt ſpring from a princi-
on—from ſupreme love to God your Heaven-
nd your dear Redeemer; who has ſaid, Chil-
our parents in all things; for this is right, and
to the Lord. He who for our ſakes be-
d, and ſet the amiable example of filial love
ce, he was ſubject to his parents in his child-

g friends, if you are obedient to your parents in
which are lawful, becauſe it is right and well
to the Lord Jeſus, herein acting from ſupreme
od and the dear Redeemer, you ſhall inherit all
ou ſhall live eſteemed and bleſſed in this world,
ſhall die happily, and be greatly lamented by
iving friends here, and be owned and honoured
Heavenly Father as his children, and be received
into the everlaſting arms of his mercy, crowned
immortal, and inveſted with the inheritance of
in light:—for if children, then heirs; heirs of
joint heirs with Jeſus Chriſt, his Bleſſed and
on, to an inheritance which is incorruptible, un-
nd which fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven

DISCOURSE

Diſcourſe XI.

ry Diſcourſe, delivered on the 1ſt of
y, 1800; in which are collected ſome
more diſtinguiſhing Hiſtorical Facts,
rovidential Events, which took place
of the laſt hundred Years.

SALM lxxvii. 10, 11, 12, 13.

To perpetuate the memory of that decisive battle between Amalek and the defenceless tribes of at Rephidim, when Amalek was utterly defeated, built an altar at or near the place where the vic- as gained, and put this inscription upon it, Jeho- *si*—the Lord is my banner. So Joshua was di- when the tribes of Israel passed through Jordan ground, to take twelve stones from the bed of the he waters being cut off before the ark of the Lord, erect them into a monument on the shore, *in perpe- i memoriam.* Samuel, in remembrance of a very sig- tory which he had miraculously obtained over the nes, set up a stone, and wrote upon it, *Ebenezer*— o the Lord hath helped us. We, having obtained om God, and begun a more distinguishing date in nals of time than any of us ever saw, (the first day 1800th year) may therefore set up our *Ebenezer*, y, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

at I purpose in the following discourse is, to call to he more remarkable events which have marked and uished the last century, and displayed the years of ht hand of the Almighty. And surely we ought ember the wonderful works of the Lord, to medi- all his doings, and talk of all his ways: for thy God is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God God!

——Began with a vacancy in the ministry in the hurch in this town. [Gloucester.] The Rev. I. on, their first ordained pastor, after more than for- rs spent in the ministry among them, died in this There was a vacancy in the government of Mas- etts, occasioned by the removal of Lord Ballamont w-York, who left the government in the hands of oughton, his Lieutenant. In this year a college anded at New-Haven in Connecticut; and the first meeting-house was built at Newport, in Rhode-

-This year Lord Ballamont died at Newyork. Dudley was appointed governor of Massa- l Newhampshire.

-Louis XIV proclaimed the Pretender king of which rendered a war between Great Britain inevitable. The governor of Canada, assum- of Father and Protector of the Indians, er- to do what they could to prevent the New- ttlements. The Pequods and the Pemaquids , and became very troublesome to the Massa- l Newhampshire.

-Meeting with some check, the Indians re- rably quiet this year, till late in the fall; but proclaimed between Great Britain and y were encouraged and supplied with arms

with good ſucceſs. They returned, in the cloſe of the year, with little loſs, ſome priſoners, and many ſcalps.

The frontiers remained quiet till the fall, when 400 French and Indians marched from Canada, and fell upon Lancaſter, Groton, Haverhill, Ameſbury, and ſome other towns and ſettlements eaſt of them, where they burnt, deſtroyed and took as many captives as they could, though not without conſiderable loſs to themſelves.

1705——There was ſome abatement of the war; and queen Ann ſignified to governor Dudley, that ſhe was laying a plan of an expedition againſt Canada, to be put in execution the next year. The Governor and Council thought it a good opportunity to endeavour the exchange or redemption of priſoners.

1706——Five men were choſen, and ſent as a flag to Canada, for that purpoſe; and they obtained all the captives, except a few children, who were adopted into Indian families, and removed at a diſtance; of theſe a daughter of the Rev. Mr. Williams, taken at Deerfield, was one, who was never recovered, but grew up among them, adopted their cuſtoms, manners and dreſs, and married a ſachem of the Onondago tribe.

1707——Small parties frequently appeared, and kept the whole frontiers in one perpetual alarm: but Chelmſford, Sudbury, Groton, Exeter, Dover, and ſome expoſed ſettlements, ſuffered the moſt. In all theſe places they burnt houſes, killed many of the inhabitants, and carried away a number into a doleful captivity: though not without ſuffering nearly equal loſs themſelves, which made them weary of the war. The governor of Canada propoſed to governor Dudley a treaty of neutrality; but governor Dudley, not falling in with the propoſal, waved an anſwer, expecting an army and a fleet from England, he ſpring, to invade Canada. Preparations were accingly made, both in England and in the colonies, eſpecially

Maſſachuſetts. But the troops which were
gland were wanted elſewhere, and ſo the er-
laid aſide.

—Opened with a very threatening aſpect.
combination of Mohawks, Penobſcots, Nor-
nd Canadians, whoſe orders were, to burn, to
waſte all the frontiers, from Connecticut
weſt, to St. John's in the eaſt. This was
ng. The court was called together; public
faſtings were appointed; volunteer compa-
iſed, but did not march until they heard that
nd of the Moſt High was doing wonders: the
turned back before they reached the place of
for a gun went off accidentally, and killed
one of their number, which they thought was
. The Penobſcots and the Norridgewoks

1710——Gen. Nicholſon, with the aſſiſtance of a ſmall naval force, took Port-Royal, with its dependencies, and ſailed for England to ſolicit another fleet and army for Canada, and obtained his object; and returned early in the ſpring.

1711——He made, with all poſſible diſpatch, the neceſſary preparations. On the 24th of June, the fleet with the tranſports arrived, and on the 30th of July ſailed for the river. On the 2d of Auguſt gen. Nicholſon ſet out for Albany, to take the command of the land army, and to purſue his former route. The fleet, commanded by admiral Walker, got, with all the tranſports, &c. ſafe into the river; but for want of good pilots, or by ſtorms, winds, fogs, or ſome other unknown cauſe, the fleet was ſo broken, ſcattered, wrecked and loſt, that few ever returned, and thoſe which did were in a very ſhattered condition; and the expedition to the weſtward failed of courſe.

1712——Was very remarkable for increaſing trouble with the Indians. A very great fire happened in Boſton, which conſumed the central part of the town; and the treaty of Utrecht took place, when peace was reſtored between England, France and Spain, in which treaty of peace the colonies were included.

1713——Peace between the colonies and the Indians was made and ratified by their chiefs on the 15th of July at Portſmouth. In this year queen Ann died, and George I was crowned.

1714——King George I was proclaimed in Boſton with great pomp, ſolemnity and joy. Governor Dudley was removed, and col. Burgeſs appointed in his room. [From *Philip's War*, which began in 1675, to 1714, Maſſachuſetts and Newhampſhire alone loſt 6000 young men and male children, who were killed, and taken without being recovered.]

1715

-Diſputes ran high in the General Court, nated in the reſignation of Governor Burgeſs; muel Shute was appointed to ſucceed him.

-Ralle, a French Jeſuit, miſſionary to the es, became ſtationary at Norridgewok, and dreſs and influence to perſuade the Indians to eace with the Maſſachuſetts, which had been atified two years before at Portſmouth. Go- e, with ſome members of the court, went to here they aſſembled the chiefs of thoſe eaſtern after ſome time perſuaded them to renew and eace before made at Portſmouth: but Ralle led with the young warriors to repeat their redations, and kept the frontiers in one per- n.

The Governor and Council were divided as to

their deſcendants, and united and inſpired them to go on; for ſaid they, Who is ſo great a god as our God?

1721——The ſmall pox broke out and prevailed in Boſton, and of 5889 who took it the natural way, 844 died. This heavy judgment delayed the operation of any effectual meaſures to prevent the ſavages' depredations.

1722——The Governor, Council and General Court were united, & proclaimed war againſt thoſe hoſtile tribes, and ſet a bounty on ſcalps and priſoners, eſpecially on Ralle's ſcalp; but choſe rather that he ſhould be taken priſoner.

1723——Several ſcalping parties were commiſſioned, and went with orders to take Ralle, if poſſible. One party ſurpriſed his dwelling, and took his box of papers, but he narrowly eſcaped. By thoſe papers it appeared, by his correſpondence with the governor of Canada, that he was the fomenter of all the trouble we had had with thoſe Indians. His death or capture became now a more intereſting object.

1724——Two companies, of 100 men each, were raiſed, and put under the command of captains Harmor and Moulton. Theſe marched on the 6th of Auguſt with a determination to take Ralle, if poſſible, dead or alive; as he was now viewed as the ſole agent, cauſe and fomenter of the war. In September following, they ſurpriſed the principal town of Norridgewok, where they found Ralle. They offered him quarter, for they meant to take him alive; but while they were endeavouring to ſecure him, he fired his piece, and wounded a friendly Indian of capt. Harmor's company. Another friendly Mohawk, of the ſame company, ſeeing that, ſhot him through the head, and he fell dead on the ſpot. After this, the heads of the tribes ſued for peace, which was ratified before the year cloſed.

1725,

Some of St. Francis's Indians engaged ſome
iors of thoſe tribes, and made great depreda-
r frontiers, and the General Court increaſed
ums on ſcalps to £100 each. This encoura-
Lovel to raiſe a company of 100 men, who
on a ſcalping party; but he was more un-
this enterpriſe than he had been heretofore;
coyed by a ſingle Indian, who ſhewed himſelf
f land ſkirting Penopeſotick pond, he was am-
a ſuperior number. Capt. Lovel and his
t under great diſadvantage, yet with ſuch
at the enemy ſuffered equal loſs, and left
of the field. The captain was mortally
nd ſoon died, with moſt of his officers and
s was the laſt conſiderable action before a
ce was ſettled at Caſco-bay.

1728——Upon the acceſſion of George II to the throne, Mr. William Burnet, ſon of the celebrated biſhop, was appointed governor of Maſſachuſetts and Newhampſhire, and received with great pomp and parade at Boſton, on the 13th of July. Upon publiſhing his orders, the probability of his having a quiet ſeat in the chair of government was very ſmall; but his death, which took place on the 17th of September, the next year, put an end to thoſe altercations which began with his adminiſtration, and which had a threatening aſpect.

1729——Governor Burnet's death was thought to be occaſioned, in part at leaſt, by the ill effects which his controverſy with the court had upon his nerves.

1730——Mr. Belcher was appointed to ſucceed governor Burnet, and he renewed and kept up the debates about a governor's power and ſalary, through his whole adminiſtration.

1731——He gave up the idea of getting his ſalary fixed, and, being poſſeſſed of popular talents, he for a while gained the eſteem and confidence of the government; yet there was a party formed againſt him, who tranſmitted loud complaints of his public conduct to England.

1732——A plan was laid to make Newhampſhire an entirely ſeparate government, and to have a diſtinct governor, who ſhould reſide in the province, and have no connexion with Maſſachuſetts.

1733——But, previous to this ſeparation, it was neceſſary to run the boundary lines. This occaſioned warm diſputes and contentions, and was finally ſettled by commiſſioners appointed by the crown of England, and ſettled more in favour of Newhampſhire than was expected, giving them 14 miles in breadth and 50 in length more than they ever claimed.

1734——Newhampſhire was made a ſeparate government, and the boundary lines run and aſcertained; but

ersy, and the adjustment of the disputes, was
ted until the year 1740.

-Governor Belcher was removed, and Mr.
hirley was appointed in his room, governor
Iachusetts, and Benning Wentworth governor
pshire.

is time a very remarkable religious commo-
to make its appearance, and was greatly pro-
the arrival of Mr. George Whitfield, and
ar preachers and pulpit orators. This was un-
wonderful work of God in the main, though
being attended in many instances with the
nthusiasm and false zeal. With many it de-
nto error and infidelity.

t remarkable event which distinguished Mr.

neral. Admiral Warren was hoped for with a ſmall force; but there was no certainty that he would , and but little reaſon to expect him. The army from Boſton on the 24th of March, and landed on oth of April in Chapeauroug bay, where, to their joy, they found Admiral Warren with a larger na- orce than had been expected. All united and laid ſiege to the city, being favoured with extraordinary weather, and other kind interpoſitions of Providence. city capitulated, and was ſurrendered on the 17th of This was a heavy and unexpected ſtroke to France, hey meant to revenge it the next year.

46——They fitted out a fleet and army on a very , bloody and extenſive plan. The fleet conſiſted of half the naval force of France. There were 14 ſhips ſt rate, and 20 ſmaller ſhips of war, with tranſports ing 8000 troops, bomb-ſhips, fire-ſhips, tenders, &c. out number. Their orders were, to begin at Che- , (now Halifax) and from thence to lay waſte by nd ſword all the ſea-coaſt to Georgia: D'Anville, bleman of France, was appointed to the command. fleet was ready to ſail by the firſt of May. But by ary winds, calms, ſtorms, and other unforeſeen diſ- , they were detained, diſperſed and broken, ſo that of them arrived at Chebucto until the 24th of Au- where they found Ramſay, a French officer from da, with 1700 men, to receive and co-operate with . When it was known what a formidable fleet had , with bloody orders, that there was an army of 1700 ch and Indians on the ſpot to receive and co-operate them, and that ſome of the fleet had actually arri- e whole country was alarmed. They flew to arms, flocked to the ſea coaſts. Public prayers and faſt- were appointed, and attended with great devotion, one calling upon his God. It was the year of the hand of the Moſt High. Thy way, O God, was in the

ſanctuary: who is ſo great a god as our God,
winds and the ſeas obey! The ſtorms, the win
ns, mutiny, and ſickneſs, diſperſed and deſtroy
le. The admiral did not arrive until the 1
tember, and then ſaw the ruin of his fleet, to hi
eration, and was either poiſoned, or died of a
y, the next day. The rear-admiral fell ſick, b
rious, and fell upon his own ſword, and was
d in his cabin the day following. The general
8000 troops, and the tranſports which carried
never been heard of ſince; and very few of the
ada ever returned. This was the Lord's doin
vellous in our eyes. We were allowed to do n
pray, faſt, and ſtand ſtill to ſee the ſalvation
d.

747——Was very remarkable for one of the mo

1748——Mr. Ballan, agent for Maſſachuſetts and New-hampſhire, obtained an act of Parliament for payment of the whole expenſe of the Louiſbourg expedition, amounting to £180,000 ſterling; which being received, the outſtanding bills of credit were redeemed, and ſilver and gold became the circulating medium of trade.

1749, 1750 & 1751——Were taken up in diſputes about the boundary lines between the Britiſh colonies and Canada, as they had not been preciſely fixed by any former treaty, but only, in general, that the river St. John's on the eaſt, the great lakes on the northweſt, and the river Miſſiſippi on the ſouthweſt, ſhould be the boundary lines; and that no forts for defence or annoyance ſhould be built on theſe lines by either nation. But the French were building a chain of forts, and eſtabliſhing military poſts, from St. Lawrence to the Miſſiſippi, which they called trading-houſes.

1752——We found them fortified, or fortifying, at all the heads of our moſt commanding waters. The colonies remonſtrated againſt the meaſure, but to no effect. This year the old ſtyle ceaſed, and the new and preſent ſtyle commenced.

1753——The ſouthern colonies ſent major Waſhington, with a ſmall armed force, to the trading houſe on or near the head of the Ohio, which they had improved into a ſtrong and impregnable fort, and given the name of Du Queſne. His orders were, to inquire into the reaſons of their fortifying; but he could obtain no anſwer from the commanding officer, but that ſuch were the orders of his maſter. This anſwer was communicated to the Britiſh court, with the information that they were fortifying on the lakes and at the head of all the commanding waters, and that their whole conduct was hoſtile.

-The Britiſh court being informed of the an-
ench commander of fort Du Queſne made to
hington, and of their hoſtile encroachments,
rmined to ſend an army the next ſpring to
e French from this fortreſs, and demoliſh all

-This army, conſiſting of two regiments, ar-
time in July, under the command of gen.
and was joined by ſome light troops, chiefly
nia, under the direction of major Waſhington,
nk of colonel. The whole army conſiſted of
y marched for Du Queſne, and col. Waſhing-
s aid-de-camp to gen. Braddock. But the
elancholy: the general, though a brave com-
t did not enter into the genius of the enemy
contend with, nor would he liſten to the re-

pected. We had to lament the loſs of ſeveral brave officers—colonels Williams, of Deerfield, and Titcomb, of Newburyport. In the cloſe of this year there was another very great and extenſive earthquake.

1756——War being proclaimed between Great-Britain and France, it was determined, by Great-Britain with her colonies, to carry the war into the very bowels of Canada. Yet while things were preparing, and plans maturing, the enemy gained ſome advantage, made further encroachments upon our boundaries, and committed depredation and ſpoil on our frontiers, and took fort Oſwego, on the hither end of lake Ontario. The colony troops were partly employed in building a fort at the head of lake George, which they called William Henry.

1757——The campaign was opened, and the command devolved on lord Loudon and gen. Webb; but, from ſome unaccountable obſtructions, little was done. Montcalm, a French general, took advantage of the dilatory meaſures of the Britiſh-American armies, marched forward, and with a large body of French and Indians inveſted fort William, and in ſix days carried it by capitulation. Though the garriſon were, by the articles of capitulation, to march out with all the honours of war, and to be ſafely eſcorted to fort Edward, 14 miles, yet the Indians, being promiſed plunder, fell upon the troops as they marched out, ſtripped them naked, and murdered all they could who made reſiſtance. Montcalm demoliſhed the fort, and returned to Canada.

1758——The Britiſh-American army rendezvouſed early at Albany. General Abercrombie, an old Scotch commander, took the charge of the enſuing campaign, though lord Howe, a young Britiſh nobleman, was really the ſoul of the army, and had the principal direction; but he was unfortunately killed by a reconnoitring party before the army arrived before Ticonderoga, the object of the

expedition; which threw the whole army into
confuſion, and a new arrangement was made;
the enemy ſeveral days to prepare to receive
ey induſtriouſly improved in throwing up im-
ines, and in artfully concealing them. The
was, the army was repulſed with great loſs,
d to the head of the lake. This was a very
ſcene, but was ſoon ſhifted. Part of the re-
ps took a different rout, up the Mohawk, re-
o, paſſed over an arm of lake Ontario, ſupriſ-
k, without loſs, Frontenac, where were depo-
oviſions and warlike ſtores for fort Du Queſne,
ourſe fell into the hands of the army, ſent
t fortreſs, under the command of general

The time drew near to favour the American

the top; and they inſcribed on it, near the foot, *Hoc ſignum vincit.* But the Virgin betrayed her truſt; their *Ave Marias* did not prevail, and *Hoc ſignum vincit* proved a lie: they blew up the fort on the 28th, and retired to Crown-point, which they abandoned the next day, and retreated with all their aparatus over lake Champlain. This was the year of the right hand of the Moſt High. We meditated on his wondrous works, and talked of all his doings, and ſaid, Who is ſo great a god as our God! This year was crowned with the conqueſt of Quebec, when both general Montcalm, the commander of the French, and general Wolfe, the Britiſh general, were ſlain. The city ſurrendered to general Townſhend, his ſucceſſor.

1760——Makes a very diſtinguiſhed era in the annals of the Anglo-American war; when all Canada, with her dependencies, forts, lakes, and a vaſt territory, was added to the Britiſh crown; and from the 8th of September we were ready to date our future peace, ſafety and political happineſs; a freedom from French and Indian wars; a happineſs we had been ſtrangers to for near a century: for, from Philip's War, which began in 1675, to 1760, the New England colonies had but little reſpite. And, conſidering the part the colonies had borne through this long, diſtreſſing, but finally ſucceſsful, war, they had a right to expect all which a mother ſtate could confer, or that her colonies could need. But O, the ſad degeneracy of human nature, the deep depravity of the heart, and the great uncertainty of all earthly things!

1761——The figure which the American colonies made in the drama of the late war inſpired the Britiſh Parliament with a ſpirit of jealouſy, even before a declaration of peace was made. The ſucceſs which attended their exertions, aided by the colonies in the Weſt-Indies, haſtened on the concluſion of the war, and gave room for parliamentary debates.

1762

—During the adminiſtration of Mr. Pitt, in the
of the reign of George II, and the beginning
George III, a liberal kind of policy had been
hich attached the colonies more than ever to
m of Great-Britain; and, had they uniform-
an equitable ſyſtem of commercial regulation,
have drawn the whole profit of our labour
nto the hands of the Britiſh merchants and
ers, and ſecured our future connexion with,
lence on, them.

—Peace being eſtabliſhed and proclaimed be-
at-Britain and France, in which the colonies
led, the Parliament of Britain began to con-
es to ſecure our future ſubjection and depen-
paſſed a reſolve in favour of their own om-
and aſſerted that they had a full right to bind

that *the ſun of liberty was ſet.* This act was called the Stamp-Act. It was an artful mode of taxing the colonies without a repreſentation—an act unconſtitutional, oppreſſive and impolitic. The colonies ſaw through the whole deſign, took the alarm, roſe in a body, and were determined, almoſt to a man, that they would not ſubmit to it. As ſoon as the ſtamp-maſters were appointed, erected their offices, and received the ſtamped papers, the *poſſe-comitatus* roſe in a body, ſeized the ſtamp-maſters, and obliged them to reſign, tore down the offices, and burnt all the ſtamped papers they could find.

1766——This act met with ſuch united oppoſition here, and the colonies had ſo many powerful friends, both in the Houſe of Lords and Commons, that on the 19th of March it was repealed by a reſpectable majority. Now we thought that the bitterneſs of our political death was paſt; and the repeal raiſed an uncommon tide of joy in every well-diſpoſed heart. But ſuch was the infatuation of the Britiſh Parliament, and the mortification and chagrin of the framers of the act, that they, availing themſelves of the national honour, obtained another; impoſing heavy duties on trade, under the ſpecious pretence of raiſing a revenue for the ſupport of civil government.

1767——This act, which was but the dregs of the Stamp-act, came to hand. We faſted and prayed to the God of Heaven, we remonſtrated and petitioned to the Britiſh crown, and aſked only for life and liberty, for peace and ſafety; but to no purpoſe. They went on, and eſtabliſhed a board of commiſſioners, and a court of admiralty, with unlimited power.

1768——But the colonies were united in their oppoſition to the operation of the revenue act, and uſed every method in their power to interrupt the officers in the execution of their buſineſs. Three of the commiſſioners eſcaped

the hazard of their lives, the other took re-
Caſtle.

—The friends of the revenue ſolicited protec-
egular military force, to be ſtationed in the
compliance with their wiſhes, his Majeſty or-
regiments, with ſome armed veſſels, immedi-
air thither to ſupport his commiſſioners in the
f their duty. Accordingly, as ſoon as could
, the two regiments came, and were peaceably

—Authentic accounts were received, that the
was ſo far repealed as to take off all duties,
hat of three pence per pound on tea. This
isfaction to the colonies: they conſidered that
was equally dangerous with a large one. On
Marsh a bloody ſcene opened. The King's

1772——A ſimilar ſpirit of oppoſition to the meaſures of the Britiſh miniſtry was diffuſed through all the colonies. The Gaſpee, a Britiſh armed ſchooner, ſtationed at Providence to protect the officers of the revenue, was burnt, and a reward of five hundred pounds promiſed to any one who ſhould diſcover the perpetrators; but no one was found to accept of the promiſed reward.

1773——The Eaſt-India tea-ſhips arrived at Boſton with the dutied article, conſigned to perſons in favour of the Britiſh claim. Application was made to the aſſignees to reſign. They ſaid it was out of their power. In the night following, ſeventeen perſons in diſguiſe repaired to the tea-ſhips, and broke open 342 cheſts, and, without doing any other damage, diſcharged their contents into the ſea.

1774——Governor Hutchinſon was recalled, and gen. Gage appointed in his room, with a large reinforcement; and the town of Boſton blockaded, in execution of a port-bill, by which they were deprived of all means of ſubſiſtence. Liberal contributions, to relieve the diſtreſs of the Boſtonians, were raiſed through America, as they conſidered them as ſuffering in the common cauſe of liberty.

1775——Now every thing wore the appearance of war; but we parried the blow till the 19th of April; when an armed force marched from Boſton to Concord, but, meeting with ſome hoſtile appearances at Lexington—a few men in arms—they unſheathed the ſword, threw away the ſcabbard, and drew the firſt blood. The alarm ſpread like lightning; the people in the vicinity flew to arms, and chaſed back the murderous band. Boſton was ſhut up. We formed a line of circumvallation from Roxbury to Chelſea, eſtabliſhing a central camp at Cambridge, and ſhut up all the Britiſh troops in Boſton—made our ſtand, and maintained our ground. Gen.

ecalled, and three able generals came in his
re, Burgoyne and Clinton—to get *elbow-room*
raſed it) and to chaſtiſe the *rebels*. While
orming a plan to penetrate into the country
Dorcheſter, the only avenue left open, Gen.
was choſen and appointed to command the
rmy, (for the preſent) to divert their atten-
oſſeſſion of Bunker's hill, in Charleſtown, and
ne lines in the night; which they perceiving,
attention to that place, and on the 1ſt of
to Charleſtown, and attacked the lines on
their main body, and carried them, though
the loſs of the flower of their troops, with
ly little loſs on the American ſide, except
and able general Warren, greatly lamented.
oughts of penetrating into the country were



fed himſelf of Docheſter heights, which gave him the command of the town of Boſton; which the enemy ſaw, feared, and fled.

On the 8th of the preceding Auguſt, capt. Lindſey, of the Falcon ſloop of war, without juſt provocation, or previous notice, cannonaded this defenceleſs town, [Glouceſter] from 1 o'clock till 5, P. M. in which encounter he loſt four of his boats, 40 of his men, and met the diſapprobation of his admiral.

1776——On the 17th of March the enemy left the town of Boſton for Halifax, with as few marks of fear, profaneneſs, cowardice and cruelty, as could be expected from the badneſs of the cauſe.

General Burgoyne took a command up the river St. Lawrence, with a deſign of penetrating into the colonies by way of the lakes. Generals Howe and Clinton, being reinforced, took a different route, and in May or June appeared off the moorings of Newyork, where they found gen. Waſhington, with his flying camp, ready to receive them. The repreſentatives in Congreſs, ſeeing all hopes of a reconciliation at an end, on the 4th of July declared the Thirteen States, in confederation, independent of Great-Britain.

A ſham negotiation was ſet on foot, through the mediation of lord Howe, which, without effect, cloſed the year.

1777——Is very memorable by the wonderful interpoſitions of Providence in our favour, too many to recount, and too recent to be forgot. I can only mention a few: On the 17th of October, the boaſting Rabſhakeh of Britain, I mean Burgoyne, was taken, with his motley army, Britons, Heſſians, Indians and Frenchmen, with all their baggage and camp eqipage, with little loſs on the American ſide; and the total defeat of the German troops at Bennington, with the ſurpriſe and capture, without

the whole Heſſian camp at Trenton, on the
ecember, crowned with the defeat of Howe's
ſerve at Princeton, with the capture of the
ge of his army lodged there. The battles of
d Princeton cloſed the year 1776, which was
he year of the right hand of the Moſt High.

–Was rendered very noticeable by the treaty
with France being cloſed, when an application
force was made, which was obtained.

–Was ſpent in ſkirmiſhing, taking and retaking
bts and reconnoitring parties, and an unſuc-
mpt made by Maſſachuſetts on the river Pe-

–On the 19th of May was a remarkable, dark
moſt people of the States were obliged to dine
ght. On the 21ſt of September general Ar-

1784——Peace was ratified by Congreſs, and proclaimed on the 5th of January, and by the king and parliament of Great-Britain on the following April.

1785——Was chiefly taken up in ſettling the expenſes of the late war.

1786——Debates ran high in Congreſs. Inſurrections were generated among the lower claſs of citizens. A very dangerous one, headed by Daniel Shays, made its appearance in the county of Worceſter, and extended its baleful influence through the counties of Hampſhire and Berkſhire; but it was ſoon quelled by the energy of governor Bowdoin, and the military ſkill and proweſs of gen. Lincoln and the brave troops under his command. A ſimilar one appeared at Exeter, in Newhampſhire, but was ſoon and happily ſuppreſſed, and peace and good order reſtored.

1787——By theſe internal diſturbances it was found, that the Confederation was deficient. A very learned and judicious delegation were choſen and ſent by the individual ſtates, and met for the profeſſed purpoſe of altering it, or framing a new conſtitution of federal government. When met in convention, they choſe general Waſhington for their preſident, and, after four months' cloſe attention, when all the jarring intereſts of different ſtates were thoroughly canvaſſed, they agreed to recommend a plan of federal government to all the United States.

1788——The new Federal Conſtitution was made public, and offered to each ſtate for its acceptance. It was adopted by a majority of the United States, and became the common law of the land.

1789——General Waſhington was choſen unanimouſly the firſt preſident of the United States under the new Federal Conſtitution, and proclaimed, with joy, on the 30th of April; and Mr. John Adams was choſen vice-preſident. By their joint mild and prudent adminiſtration,

n the Union began to aſſume a new and beau-
: peace ſeemed to ſpring from the earth, and
ſs to look down from above. And we promiſ-
that we ſhould for the future ſit under our vines
trees, and that we ſhould eat the good of our
nat there ſhould be none who ſhould make us
perfect peace, the earth ſaith, is not in me.

91, 1792——The Britiſh, not cured of their
alouſy, under the flimſy excuſe that we had
d with the articles of the treaty of peace, re-
e up the weſtern poſts which they held within
which occaſioned a correſpondence between
eſter, governor of Canada, and the preſident
d States, upon the ſubject, but without effect.
-Various tribes of Indians became very trou-
d made war upon the frontiers of the weſtern



ſucceſsful abroad, a dangerous inſurrection aroſe in the upper counties of Pennſylvania; but the militia of that ſtate offered themſelves willingly unto the help of the Lord. They muſtered and marched under the inſpecting eye of our late worthy preſident, at whoſe preſence the heart of anarchy melted, the malignant ſpirit of fell diſcord fled, and the miſguided were reduced to good order and peace without bloodſhed.

1796——In conſequence of a well-founded and a well-adminiſtered government, unexampled proſperity enſued, and the nation, though in her minority, increaſed in population, commerce, ſcience, arts, manufactures, and in every branch of improvement, with amazing rapidity.

The preſident of the United States reſigned his commiſſion on the 17th of September, and took his leave of the preſidency, and left his farewel addreſs with Congreſs, a precious legacy to the United States, and refuſed to be conſidered a candidate in a future election.

1797——Mr. John Adams was choſen preſident, and Mr. Thomas Jefferſon vice-preſident, of the United States. The French nation, irritated at the treaty we had made with Great-Britain, and not being pleaſed with our choice of preſident, or our reſolutions ſtrictly to obſerve the laws of neutrality, aſſumed a hoſtile appearance, and committed great depredations on our trade and commerce.

Preſident Adams, by advice, thought it beſt to ſend envoys extraordinary to France with full power to ſettle or remove all exiſting difficulties, to alter the old, or make a new, treaty with the French Republic; but they were not received, and were therefore recalled by the preſident, with an aſſurance to the directory, that he would not ſend any other until he had received the moſt explicit promiſe that they ſhould be received, and treated in all reſpects

reſpects as ambaſſadors of a free, independent and great nation.

By an act of Congreſs, the former treaty of alliance, amity and commerce was diſſolved, and commerce ſuſpended, and preparations were made for a defenſive war.

1798——An army was raiſed. Our infant navy acquired ſtrength from acts of government. General Waſhington, being appointed to the command of the army now raiſing for the defence of the States, he, though he had retired from public that he might enjoy the ſweets of domeſtic life, as ſoon as he ſaw his country inſulted and threatened, nobly ſtepped forth again in her injured cauſe, and took a commiſſion, as lieutenant-general and commander in chief, from Mr. Adams, the preſident; willing to ſacrifice the laſt remains of life in his country's cauſe.

1799——Preſident Adams received the moſt explicit aſſurance, from the directory of the French Republic, that his envoys ſhould be well received and accredited. He ſent other envoys, inveſted with the ſame authority as the former.

Laſt June our worthy and beloved INCREASE SUMNER, governor of Maſſachuſetts, died, very much lamented, and left the government in the hands of his Honour Moſes Gill, his lieutenant. But the year cloſed with the much more melancholy death of our beſt-beloved, general WASHINGTON; who, though he was not called to encounter the enemies of his country, yet was ſuddenly called to encounter death, the common enemy of mankind, in the chamber of ſickneſs and pain. And even here, like a chriſtian hero, he conquered the laſt enemy, on the 14th day of the laſt month of the laſt year, 1799; when he appeared more then a mere conqueror. He laid aſide the harneſs for the palm of victory and the crown

of

of glory. Thus, under this dark cloud, edged with the celeſtial beams of light, we cloſe the laſt and begin a new century. We muſt reſign, and ſay—

Farewel, *Great Soul*, a ſhort farewel,
Till we ſhall meet again above
In the ſweet groves where pleaſures dwell,
And trees of life bear fruits of love.

THE END.





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